CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XLVI. NO. 33. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1918 5 CENTS A COPY.

The QUARTERBREED

By ROBERT AMES BENNET

BEAUTY, LOVE, AND ACTION FILLS THIS TALE OF THE INDIAN COUNTRY

START IT NOW

Not Like Fiction.

"NO MORE do I believe in these jolly magazine stories where the perfectly proper heroine meets a perfectly proper hero in some queer, rakish way that also is perfectly proper, but doesn't look it," said the auburn-haired girl in the brown sport suit firmly. "I was cut out to lead a humdrum life and whenever I try to convince myself differently all the jinxes get busy!

"Why, Robert W. Chambers himself would have chortled with joy at that opening! Lovely day in the park, everything green and shining under the gay summer sun, and a fair, lithe young creature clad in raiment so studiously plain that it must have been horribly expensive, with perfectly groomed hair—I had just been to a shampoo artist—and a becoming hat and $12 Oxfords, gliding along toward the lake.

"With her wide gaze upon the heaven's blue, our heroine suddenly decided to abandon the path and take a short cut—and darting thru the bushes she emerges as tho shot thru a trap door, right into the road—heavens, a motor at full speed!"

"Tame, tame!" murmured the young person in green stripes in the hammock.

"It isn't at all tame, because a man was running the car," insisted the auburn haired one. "In these manless days, too! It was a long, low, rakish runabout and he pulled it right up on its haunches when I shrieked and sat down. Right in the road!

"When a lady thinks she is killed dead why shouldn't she sit down? He was horribly mad until he saw what a helpless, fragile creature he had nearly scattered over the scenery, then he hopped out of his car in a hurry, tho it was snorting and groaning and threatening things in retaliation for the wrench it had got at his hands. He looked down and I looked up and then he asked foolishly, 'Why don't you get up?' Much to my surprise, I realized that I couldn't get up. I had twisted my ankle.

"I really had. I had twisted it before I had a chance to see that he was that rare creature, a man who was young and good looking. He helped me stagger to my feet and there we were in the roadway, I clinging affectionately to an absolutely strange gentleman.

"I had an insane desire to raise long lashed eyes to him and murmur, 'Tis fate!' as they do in the movies, but I did the next banal thing. 'Wh-what'm I going to do now?' I whimpered, because my ankle certainly did hurt.

"He really was very nice about it. He said I'd have to get into his car and he'd get me home, and anyhow it was all his fault. If I hadn't had on my best hat he'd never have been so contrite.

"Ever since I was a child of 3 I've known that under no circumstances must I accept an invitation to ride from a perfect stranger, but I didn't feel like sitting by the roadside waiting till some friend came along. Besides, he had me in his car. And when he climbed in and jerked levers and pushed buttons the car just stood pat and wouldn't budge.

"Well, that poor man did everything with that car his book of rules ever instructed him to do, and all the time I could see he was getting madder and madder. It was most uncomfortable, and just then I saw my married brother's car approaching.

"Married brothers are heaps worse than the bachelor kind and his wife was with him and everything, and I knew it would take yards of explanation to explain to his satisfaction. Then I remembered the agile heroines in the magazine stories. So when Richard pulled up alongside to help and my hero got up from his knees, grease on his cheek and glare in his eyes, I waited a brief second for Richard to say, after the fiction fashion: 'Well, Jasper Fredericks, where did you hail from? We have not met since the dear old college days.'

"He didn't. Something had to be done. And I just said glibly: 'Richard, Mr. Jones! Our—the car seems broken!'

"'Not Jones!' snapped my hero. 'My name is Millbank, John H. Millbank, and unless you can oblige with a wrench I'm going to miss my train and make an awful mess of things!'

"I never saw a man so mad at being called Jones when he wasn't. And, of course, I had to explain then to Richard and his wife, and I'm still explaining and always shall be explaining unless they move to another town. And to this dying day I expect that Millbank person will think I jumped out in the road in front of his car on purpose! He hadn't the remotest idea how a hero ought to act! I don't think it's being done nowadays!"

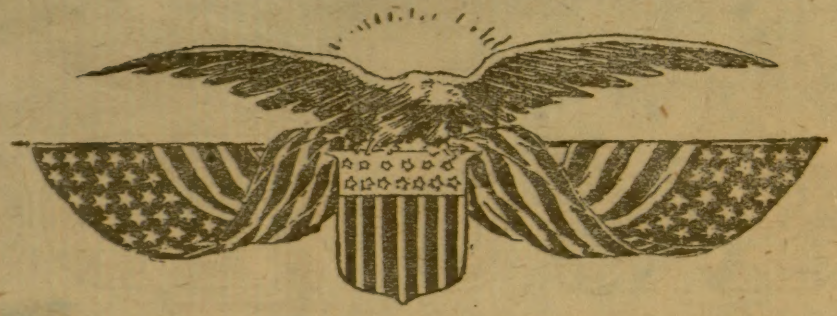
"Ha, ha!" said the girl in the hammock. "The trouble was he thought it was the one reel comedy instead of the main film and he wanted to get away before you began throwing custard pies!"

R R R

A Helpful Suggestion.

"JOHN has decided that for the present we must hold our hogs," said the cousin from the farm.

"But—ah!—" a trifle obfuscatedly returned the city cousin who was entertaining her. "Wouldn't it do quite as well to rock the animals in cradles or swing them in hammocks?"



The Editor Has His Say Here

THIS week the editor wants to tell you the story told by a stenographer who worked for a good many years for the W. D. Boyce Company. She decided to spend the summer in the big woods of Minnesota, far away from the noise and hurry of a big city, from the click of typewriters, from the clatter of typesetting machines, from the hum and roar of printing presses. To tell the truth, she thought she was just a little tired of having her entire life wrapped up in things concerning the Chicago Ledger, The Saturday Blade and "Lone Scout." So one day not long ago she left Chicago. She went by rail up into the few bits of real wilderness left in the United States. She rode a logging train deep into the wilds, took a small boat and went more miles down a stream, then walked still more miles to her destination—a homestead such as our pioneer forefathers built and lived in. Then she changed into old clothes, made up her mind to forget everything and just play and relax during her entire stay.

CAME the next day and the man of the house announced that he was going to town for the neighborhood mail. That is the way they do it up there—the men take turns about going to their nearest postoffice, miles and miles away, and getting the mail for the neighborhood. He came back late in the day, somewhat tired after his long tramp and on his back was the sack of mail. Around him gathered his family and such of the neighbors as were anxious to get their word from the outside world. He opened up the sack and dumped the mail on the cabin floor and out rolled a bundle of newspapers. It seemed as if every one present made a dive for that bundle. And the stenographer got the surprise of her life. For staring up at her were the very things she had come so many miles to get away from—the Blade, the Ledger and "Lone Scout."

"Say, but wasn't I tickled," she wrote back to us. "Didn't I feel like I had seen a friend from home? You just bet I did." She went on to name the other papers which penetrated that distant community. "These papers comprise the intellectual food of these people," she said, "but The Saturday Blade and Chicago Ledger come first of all. The other papers are scarcely read. As soon as the mail bag is opened every one grabs for the Blade and Ledger and the youngsters seize the 'Lone Scout.'" She said a great deal more, too, and never was a more welcome letter received in this office.

FOR sometimes an editorial staff grows discouraged, just as you get discouraged with whatever is your life work. Then it is that some person sends in a letter which shows that after all somewhere your work is appreciated, that somewhere people are watching eagerly for the mail which brings to them the Ledger and the Blade and "Lone Scout" to brighten up their lives until the papers have been read from cover to cover. For, as we have told you before, that is the mission of these papers—to keep you in touch with the whole world, to amuse and entertain you, to keep up your spirits, to enable you to feel that the Ledger and the Blade and "Lone Scout" are friends tried and true and that you can depend upon them. When people feel about papers as do these people way up there on this little homestead, is it any wonder that the Government has decided that publications are an essential industry, almost on a par with the great factories which turn out the guns and ammunitions with which we are trying to make the whole world safe?

INCIDENTALLY, we read in a Chicago daily today where many of the publishing houses which up to now have been issuing their papers in the East or the West are coming to Chicago for their new headquarters. It will enable them to save a great deal of postage under the new rates and it will make it possible for some of them to keep on struggling against the adverse conditions surrounding the publishing business. The Ledger and the Blade already are on the ground in this central location. They are centrally located so that no matter where you live you can get your paper as you have got them in the past and it makes it unnecessary for the W. D. Boyce Company to raise its rates as so many other papers are doing in order to make ends meet. Your Ledger and your Blade come to you for the same old price of 5 cents each, the biggest nickel's worth, either of them, in the country today.

PERHAPS you already have turned to the new serial this week, "The Quarterbreed." If not, we suggest that you do not fail to begin it now. If you don't read this story you will be sorry when your neighbors and other friends get to talking about what a good tale it is. So many persons fail to start a serial and later pick up a magazine in which an installment is printed and get interested and write to us to supply them with back copies so they can get the whole story. Generally we can do so, but sometimes we run out. In the future this probably will happen more frequently as the Government urges publishers to print no more copies than actually are needed. So the best thing is to read the serials as they come to you. We recall the story of a traveling man who was reading an absorbing story in a magazine. The train on which he was riding was wrecked just as he reached the most interesting part. He lost the magazine and was not able to recall its name or the title of the story and, for a long time after that he was quite worried because he was unable to find out what happened to the hero.

NEXT week we are offering you another splendid serial, "In the Were-wolf's Claws." The were-wolf, in case you are not familiar with the legends concerning him, is supposed to be a human who can change himself into a wolf at will and wreak upon others the cruelty and viciousness which is his real self. In some European countries and among the people of the Canadian woods the were-wolf legend still is told and believed. Of course it is pure superstition, but it affords a splendid basis for the story which you can begin reading next week. "In the Were-wolf's Claws" in not a story for timid folk to read in the lonely hours of the night, for it is quite likely in spots to start you to shivering and make the cold chills chase themselves up and down your back and cause your hair to rise on end. It is splendidly written and we defy you to guess the solution of the mystery until the author chooses to reveal it.

THE usual number of short stories will be offered next week and particularly do we want you to read "Marky and the Silver Lining," by Charles T. Jordan, who has given us several good stories of the theater in the past. This one has to do with a press agent and not only will it interest you as a revelation of how some of the wheels go around in the stage world, but it is chock-full of humor and laughable incidents. We think you will agree with us that "Marky and the Silver Lining" is a dandy story.

The Editor.

R R R

Be Quick.

Gertie and Maudie were discussing the tender passion in all its phases.

"How many times do you make a young man propose to you before you say yes?" questioned Maudie.

"If you have to make him propose you'd better say yes the first time," answered Gertie.

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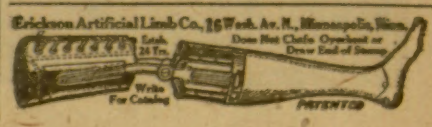

FOUNDED 1873

Single Copies—5 Cents
Delivered by Agent

One Year (52 issues)—$1.50
By Mail Direct to You

CHICAGO LEDGER

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY
W. D. BOYCE COMPANY, CHICAGO, ILL.
500-514 NORTH DEARBORN STREET.

Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice at Chicago, Ill., under act of March 3, 1879.

VOL. XLVI. CHICAGO, ILL., AUGUST 17, 1918. No. 33.

Here Begins a Splendid Serial of Indians, Adventure and Love in the Northwest

Rd.

THE QUARTERBREED

By Robert Ames Bennet

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CHAPTER I.
UNDER FIRE.

IN ITS spring freshness the usual dreary brown of the Montana range was tempered with a pleasant green that shaded to emerald on the low-lying ground, and the swells and hollows were alike spangled with spring flowers. But the midday sun was blistering hot, and the rider had long since wearied of the monotony of the high plains. As his long-limbed mare trotted up the slope of the ridge that lay along the bank of Wolf River, he turned the gaze of his small, clear hazel eyes from the craggy butte on his right to the snowy crests of the Little Paw Mountains.

The nearest of the rugged pine-clad spurs were now only four or five miles away. He had almost reached the Reservation. The river marked the boundary. Soon he would be across on Indian ground and covering the last short stretch to the Agency. The rangy stride of his thorobred mount was as easy and unfaltering as when she had borne him away from the half dozen shacks of the nearest "town" on the railroad, fifty miles back over the open range. But as they began to top the rise, he drew her down to her rapid walk, and took out his field glasses.

Across on the distant slope, midway to the foot of the outlying hills, the rider's keen eye noted a herd of grazing cattle. Hardly had he focused his powerful little binoculars on the herd when from across the coulee, a short distance downstream, came the crack of a high-power rifle. A moment later the shot was followed by three deeper reports from an equal distance upstream. The military bearing of the rider instantly became more pronounced. His hand dropped on the butt of his rifle, but only to loosen the weapon in its saddle sheath. No bullets had come pinging or whirring past him.

The first shot was smokeless. Not so the others. The bluish smoke puffs of their charges of black powder directed the gaze of the rider to the dozen or more swarthy, half-naked forms from the butte. He had no need of his glasses to perceive that they were Indians and that he was not the object of their attack. All were warily peering down the coulee along the edge of the bank on which they lay outstretched. Another crack of the high-power rifle caused the rider to turn his gaze in the same direction.

The road ran obliquely across the narrow valley to a side gulley that gashed the far bank a hundred yards or so downstream. Back in the shelter of this gulley four or five ponies stood grouped before a buckboard. Above them a man was crouched under the edge of the bank. Another man lay behind a small bush just outside the entrance of the gulley. Each had his rifle pointed in the direction of the Indians.

The rider glanced doubtfully at the larger party and then back to the gulley. A woman in civilized dress was coming around from the rear of the buckboard. The erect figure of the rider tensed with quick decision. He wheeled his mare out of the road, to cut down the sharp slope directly towards the Indians. His voice rang across the coulee with the clearness of a bugle call: "Ho, there! Cease firing!"

Suddenly made aware of the newcomer's approach by his command, the Indians twisted about to glare at him in a half panic. Three or four started to slink away. But one, more fierce or desperate than the others, swung his rifle around and fired. The bullet grazed the rider's coat collar at the side of his neck. His right hand had been replacing the field glasses in their case. He flung up the empty hand, palm outward. The reply to the peace sign was a second bullet that cut the crown of his campaign hat.

Two bullets were enough to change the tactics of the rider. At a word from him and a touch of the rein, his mare swerved and plunged obliquely down the side of the coulee. The Indians burst into exultant yells, and several opened fire on the fugitive. Bullets whizzed all about the erect, stern-faced rider as the mare leaped on down to the coulee and dashed across the bottom towards the gulley.

She Straightened No Less Swiftly and Stood Poised, the Whip Raised to Strike.

Fortunately all the Indians were pothunters, unused to shooting their game on the run. The fugitive was also favored by the great speed of his mare and the diversion caused by the hot fire at the Indians maintained by the two men and the woman in the gulley. Urged on by his voice and spurless heel, the mare sprinted over the sandy level with the rush of a racehorse on the home stretch. Coming to the narrowed stream, she covered it in a single tremendous leap, and dashed on, unchecked, up into the gulley, safe out of reach of those whirring leaden hornets.

As they swept past the low bush at the entrance of the gulley, the rider looked down at the man behind it. He saw a blond, florid young fellow whose blue eyes and small red-lipped mouth were ugly with hate.

The woman, crouched just beyond, under the edge of the bank, was blazing away towards the Indians with an automatic revolver. She was so intent on her firing that she did not turn to glance about at him. He could see only the mass of her black hair and the lower part of her aristocratic profile under the brim of her cowboy hat.

An instant later he was pulling up his mare in the narrow space between the ponies and the side of the gulley. As she came to a stop alongside the buckboard, he patted her quivering neck and looked up with cool alertness at the third member of the party, under the brink of the bank. The man ceased firing and twisted his thickset body half about so that he could stare down at the newcomer. His close-cropped hair was grizzled, his face leathery and stolid. The cast of his features indicated French-Canadian blood.

The fusillade of the Indians had ceased the instant their view of the fugitive was cut off. Yet, after a single hard look, the man on the bank turned away to thrust his rifle up over the edge and shoot. The rider wheeled his mare and rode back past the skittish ponies. The woman had crept in from the entrance of the gulley to where she could stand upright without exposing herself to the fire of the Indians.

She came up the slope with an easy, springing step that told of youthful buoyancy. From under the hem of her neat gingham dress peeped the toes of small, blue-beaded moccasins. Having reloaded her pistol, she raised her head to look up at the rider. He was lifting his hand to touch his hat with perfunctory courtesy. Then he saw her face—calm, proud, vividly beautiful.

He removed his hat, with a sudden change in his manner that brought a gleam into the girl's blue-black eyes. The glare of the midday sun relentlessly exposed the lines furrowed by suffering in his strong, plain face and the pallor under its tropical tan. From the white hairs that silvered his thick ruddy locks at the temples, his age might have been put at 35 or 40. But this sign of middle age was contradicted by his eyes.

A trifle disconcerted by the girl's cool scrutiny, he brusquely demanded: "What is the trouble here?"

"Trouble?" she replied. "What trouble?"

"I beg your pardon, Miss," he said, stiffening under her ironical smile. "I should have inquired if you've had any casualties."

She looked from his cavalry puttees to his Army saddle and the butt of his rifle.

"I guess you needn't worry about your scalp," she reassured him, her rich contralto voice as soft as it was sweetly mocking. "You came near getting a hair brand, I see. But you're safe enough now if you keep close."

The raillery brought a slight flush into his sallow cheeks. Yet his gaze did not flinch before her look of disdain. He asked another question: "Have they taken the Agency?"

"No. We saw this bunch up the bank. Reggie cut loose at them before Pere could stop him."

"'Pere?' Ah—your father. The other man fired at them first, you say?"

"Can you blame him? He was along when the agent was shot down, last week. You may have heard of the murder."

"Yes, still it was wrong for him to invite an attack, with a woman in his party."

"Oh, I'm only a quarterbreed, you know," replied the girl with ironical lightness. "Besides, Reggie thought the party was trying to head us off. Don't worry. Charlie Redbear crawled up the road half an hour ago. The chances are we can hold out until he fetches the police." A rifle shot punctuated the remark.

The rider looked over the coulee bank across at the jagged crest of the butte. "If they slip over there," he said, "this position will become untenable."

"How are they going to slip over, with Reggie waiting to slip a bullet into them?" queried the girl. "Pere is keeping them from circling around the other way. Of course, tho, they may have sent a party up the coulee, to sneak across beyond rifle shot and come down to the butte."

"Ah, quite true!" muttered the rider. "If they have done that, this position will certainly be untenable. The butte is the key to the situation."

He looked at the girl, between concern and swiftly growing admiration of her remarkable beauty. Her eyes were like blue-black diamonds. An almost imperceptible film of old-gold enriched the cream and rose of her cheeks. Her jet-black hair was of French fineness. The curve of her rather large mouth was perfect.

But the red lips were again parting in a disdainful smile. She replied without seeking to conceal her scorn: "If you're afraid they'll take the butte, you might get away by bolting down the coulee. We'll do what we can to draw their fire."

"You will?" he said, and he again looked up over the gulley edge at the crest of the butte, the corners of his tight lips twitching under the stubby ends of his mustache.

"Hey!" the man on the bank called down to him. "Haven't got a plug in your jeans, have you? I want a chaw. This here's mighty dry work."

"No," curtly replied the rider, and he bowed to the girl. "Thank you for your suggestion. I believe I'll follow it. Kindly step aside."

She stood motionless, her eyes glittering with cold contempt of his cowardice. Unchecked by the look, he turned his mare aside to pass around her. At the same time he tightened his grip on the reins. The thorobred responded to the

signal by stretching out her lean neck and gathering herself together for a sudden dash. Her rider tightened his hat, leaned forward in the saddle, and gave her the word.

The mare leaped away like a startled deer, bolting out of the gulley along the road as if to return the way she had come. But, once clear of the entrance, her rider leaned far over and pulled hard on the right rein. She swerved sharply and raced away down the coulee. The flight was so unexpected, so daring and so swift that the fugitive had been borne a good fifty yards down along the front of the near slope before the Indians opened fire on him.

The girl had crept forward and crouched in the entrance of the gulley to peer after him.

"The coward!" she cried. "The coward! I hope they get him!"

But before one of the many bullets could find the leaping, receding mark, mare and rider shot out of sight behind a clump of willows. At once the firing ceased.

The blond young man under the bush glanced around at the girl and called jeeringly: "I say, Marie, how's that for a bobtail visit? Took him for a gentleman."

"Gentleman? That's the word," she mocked. "Conduct becoming an officer and gentleman."

"Officer?" he repeated. "You don't mean to say——"

"Yes," she asserted. "He's an Army officer. I could see it sticking out all over him.

The man stared at her in blank amazement, but suddenly bethought himself to roll over and send a bullet pinging up the coulee.

CHAPTER II.
STRATEGY.

THE girl continued to peer down the river bottom. After several moments mare and rider dashed into view, racing directly across the coulee. Tho the Indians at once opened fire the mare had skimmed over the level and up into a gulley in the far bank before they could get the range.

Hopeful that one or more of the enemy might expose themselves during the excitement, the young man behind the bush had not looked around. As the firing ceased, he called officially: "How about the strategic retreat? Does General Fabius make his getaway without casualties?"

"Le bon Dieu be praised! He has escaped," the girl mocked in turn. "We are saved. In a week or ten days he will return to the rescue with three troops of cavalry."

"If those sneaking coyotes have sent a delegation around to climb the butte from the upside we'll get ours before Charlie can come back with the police," grumbled the young man.

"Yes. Our military expert saw that at once. He said this position would become untenable."

"So he ran, leaving a woman in the lurch—the skunk!"

"Well, he has gone. You'd better be thinking how to get us out of the hole you've got us into," suggested the girl.

"Lord! I felt sure they'd scatter and run for it when I opened up on them. Anyway, all I did was to knock up the dust in front of them. The way they came back at me proves they really were scheming to get us."

"Much you know about it," scoffed the girl. "Just because some of the tribe are feeling ugly is no sign that——"

"How about the murder of Nogen?"

"Well, how? You and Charlie both say there was only the one buck who did the shooting. No; if this bunch had been planning to get us, they'd have been out of sight under the edge of the bank or over on the butte when we first came along."

"Have it your own way—only toss me a bottle of beer, that's a good girl. I'm dry as a fish."

"No beer—all out—not even any Vichy," she replied. "You'll have to take eau de fontaine."

"Spring water!" he groaned. "Why couldn't this have happened on our way back?"

"You then might not have been in a condition to shoot straight," the girl thrust at him.

Recklessly he sat up and looked at her, his blue eyes frankly unashamed, his small mouth curving in a devil-may-care smile under the neat mustache.

"Now, now, Miss Dupont," he jested. "You've seen me half shot, but you've yet to see me shot."

"I shall if you don't get down," she warned. A bullet whizzed close over his head. "There! You came near catching that one. They've spotted your position. Come away!" Her voice quavered with concern for him.

He smiled with a touch of bravado. Two bullets clipped thru the bush and thwacked into the sod on either side of him. They proved more convincing than her alarmed entreaty. He flattened himself on the ground and wormed his way toward her along a shallow rain-cut at the edge of the road. Half a dozen bullets snipped off twigs of the bush that had sheltered him.

The girl did not wait for him to reach her. Satisfied as to his safety, she went up the gulley to the buckboard and drew a canteen from the box under the seat. Her father glanced down and saw what she was doing. His face was powdered with dust. He spat and beckoned to her.

"Good! Bring it up! Bullet hit the edge of the bank."

"Not from the butte, was it, Jake?" called the young man.

"Naw. Phew! Hurry up, Marie, won't you?"

The girl climbed nimbly up the gulley side with the canteen. Her father spat again, took a deep drink, and said: "Better git the ponies round behind the buckboard. Unless Charlie gits back soon we may have to leave the ore and make a break for the Agency."

"All right, Pere," cheerfully responded the girl. "There haven't any of them been hit so far, I guess. They may be willing to let us off with a big scare."

"I'll give them a scare and something more when the police come," declared the young man, who had taken a new position in the opening of the gulley.

"No, you won't," remonstrated the girl as she started down to him with the canteen. "When old Ti-owa-konza sent in word that he'd call it quits over the shooting of Nogen's killer, he meant it. But this time you fired the first shot, and if you kill one of them it will mean a blood feud, if not an uprising."

The young man snapped his fingers. "I don't give that much for the whole pack of coyotes!"

"Don't forget the mine, Mr. Van," protested the older man.

"Yes, and how about me?" asked the girl as she held out the canteen.

"That settles it," he replied. "To please you, I'll—what do you say?—I'll call it quits." Shaking a gush of water out over the spout, he lifted the canteen in gallant salute and carried it to his lips.

"Better hurry with them ponies, Marie," called her father.

She did not wait for the canteen, but walked swiftly up the gulley to the restive ponies. As she led the two saddle horses around to the rear of the buckboard the young man called up to her: "Shorten my stirrups. That pinto is the best runner in the bunch."

"Can you make it bareback?" she asked.

"He can hold on to the harness," said her father. "Tie the tugs so they won't drag."

"Yes, I guess I can hold on. I'll try the calico mare."

"Any sign on the butte?" she inquired, her supple gloved fingers deftly freeing the harnessed ponies from the buckboard.

"Nothing yet," answered the young man. "I'm expecting a bullet soon."

"This ain't no joke, Mr. Van," complained the other man. He glowered at the butte. Suddenly his trained eyes caught sight of an object moving up the steep slope of a crag. He clapped his rifle to his shoulder, sighted it, paused—and lowered the weapon, with an astonished oath.

"Pere!" cried the girl. "What is it?"

"Wait!" he replied. "If it is—by Gar, if it is! Git ready, Mr. Van. Only don't shoot unless they rush us."

"What's that?" demanded the young man.

He was answered by the report of a rifle on the nearest crag of the butte. Yet no bullet had come whirring down into the gulley ahead of the sound. And when he stared up at the rocky height along the barrel of his up-flung rifle, he could see no sign of smoke.

"No. Below—watch!" shouted the older man.

The report of a second smokeless powder cartridge came down from the butte crest. The young man lowered his rifle and peered over the edge of the valley. At the same moment a whirl of yelling horsemen swept down the coulee bank opposite the butte, and went flying away up the valley in a wild race for the nearest grove of cotton woods.

From the butte several shots cracked in rapid succession. The fugitive Indians yelled at their ponies in a frenzy of urgency, and dug their heels into the flanks of the straining beasts at every jump. The rifleman on the butte was firing toward them, not towards the party in the gulley.

"Hold on, Marie!" said her father, jumping down the bank to her. "We'll hitch up again and cross over to meet him.

"Who?" asked the girl.

She had been too intent on her task to see what was happening.

"The man who ran away," he answered. "The joke's on you and Mr. Van."

"How?"

Her father grinned as he bent to refasten a tug. "Just 'cause the fellow didn't yank out his rifle and stick in the hole with us, you took him for a quitter. He had the nerve to run their fire ag'in—and you thought he was heading back for the railroad."

The girl flushed. "He's not the man on the butte?"

"Yep. Jumped the whole bunch, first shot. We better hustle. It'll look good for us to cross over to meet him."

"Marie says he's an Army officer," added the young man. "It will be as well to get the ore off the Reservation. There's no telling what he has come for."

CHAPTER III.
THE ACTING AGENT.

WITHIN a few minutes the party had crossed the coulee bottom and started up the heavy grade on the far bank. The girl sat in the creaking buckboard; her companions rode ahead. As they neared the top of the ridge, the thoroughbred mare came trotting up from the hollow on the other side.

The older man spurred his pony up the round of the summit. "By Gar, that wasn't no bad play you made, partner," he called. "Taking the butte gave you the drop on 'em."

The buckboard came to a stop in the road close alongside his mare. The girl looked up at him with confident expectancy in her sparkling eyes. He did not move. The expression of his harsh features was severe, but there was a flush under the tropical tan on his cheeks.

She hesitated, her rich color deepening. Then her pique gave way to a more generous impulse.

"Can you forgive me?" she asked.

He bowed formally. "If you think there is anything to be forgiven."

"You know there is. I wish to apologize."

She stood up and held out her hand. It was very white and shapely. He bowed over it with grave courtesy, as he took it in his nervous grasp.

"You have no need to apologize, Miss ——"

"Dupont—Marie Dupont."

"None whatever, Miss Dupont," he went on. "I should have explained my intentions."

"Why didn't you make for the butte first thing, instead of crossing the coulee?" broke in the blond young man. "Any fool could have seen the lay of things."

"I did not wish to shoot until I understood the cause of the trouble. There was also the chance that they would cease firing when I rode toward them."

"That was nervy of you," remarked the girl's father—"that and making the second run when they'd come so near gitting you the first time."

"You are Jacques Dupont, the Indian trader?"

"That's me—only they make it 'Jake' this side of Ottawa. Marie guessed you're an Army officer."

"Captain Floyd Hardy, United States Cavalry," stated the newcomer.

The blond young man straightened, and spoke in the tone of a gentleman: "Pleased to meet you, Captain Hardy. You were in command of the Philippine Constabulary force that suppressed the recent insurrection in the Sulu Islands. You received favorable mention from Congress. I am Reginald Vandervyn, of the Vandervyns of Staten Island. Senator Clemmer is my uncle."

The captain responded with a curt bow.

"See anything of the p'leece, Cap?" asked Dupont.

"Yes. They should be here in a few minutes."

"They're slow," growled Vandervyn. "I'll ride back and head them 'cross country. They have good horses. They shall run down or trail out every d—d buck in the bunch."

He spun his pony about to sprint down the road into the coulee. Hardy lowered the field-glasses and uttered a stern order: "Halt!"

Angered at the command and still more at the impulse that compelled him to obey it, Vandervyn twisted about in his saddle to face the officer with a challenging stare.

"Keep that talk for your inferiors," he said. "I am acting agent of this Reservation. What I say goes. I'll have those bucks trailed till every one of them is in the guardhouse or feeding the crows."

"You are mistaken, Mr. Vandervyn," replied Hardy, and he drew an official envelope from an inside pocket. "You are only the chief clerk on this Reservation. I have been detailed to serve as acting agent."

"You? cried Vandervyn. "Why, it was all fixed for me to be appointed agent. My uncle wired me that my name would go thru for the promotion without a hitch. So you pulled the wires to cut me out?"

"I pulled no wires, Mr. Vandervyn," Hardy coldly met the accusation. "On my return from the Islands, last month, I asked for a detail to active service in the open, preferably here in the Northwest, on account of my health."

"Do you mean to say you did not ask for this place in particular?"

"No. The detail was given me because of the killing of the late agent and the reported restlessness of the tribe."

"You'll find these ugly bucks different from Moros."

"Perhaps," said Hardy. He looked at the two big, lumpy sacks that were lashed on the buckboard. "You had started for the railroad?"

"Pere and Mr. Van wished to ship out the ore," explained the girl.

"Ore?" inquired Hardy.

"Well, yes, it's a sort of ore," admitted Dupont. "You see, me and——"

"I'll make it clear to Captain Hardy in two words, Jake," broke in Vandervyn. He looked at the new agent with a frank, direct gaze. "You see, Captain, some of the Indians have been getting ore, back in the mountains. Jake trades them goods for it. The barter has been a good thing for them, and so far, I believe, Jake has lost nothing."

Dupont narrowed his shrewd gray eyes as if calculating. "Well, no, that's no lie, Cap. Take it in the long run, I ain't lost nothing. It might figure out I've broke even or mebbe some better."

Vandervyn winked at Hardy. "When an Indian trader admits he may have done some better than to have come out even, we can guess what that means."

"Nom d'un chien!" grumbled Dupont. "Ain't the risk to count?"

"It has been an unnecessary risk for you to keep your daughter on the Reservation after the killing of Mr. Nogen," reproved Hardy. "I presume she is now going away, not to return until the trouble has passed."

"You are quite mistaken, Captain Hardy," said the girl. "I am going for the drive and to send off a mail-order. If I hadn't wanted the change, I would have stayed at the Agency. We can rely on the police. Anyway, none of the tribe would hurt me."

"That's not so certain," differed Vandervyn. "There's no telling what the murderous devils won't do when they get to ki-yi-ing. Even the police might break loose. Isn't that so, Jake?"

Dupont scratched his head and muttered:

"Well, mebbe so, Mr. Van. You can't always tell what they'll do."

"Why, Pere," exclaimed Marie, "you know there's not the slightest danger to me."

"Well, mebbe not—to you," he acquiesced.

"Yet it will be advisable for you to remain away until I have the situation well in hand," said Hardy.

The girl's eyes flashed at the slight suggestion of dictation. "I'll do as I please, thank you," she rejoined.

"In this instance you may," agreed Hardy, "since your father admits that

you are in no danger. Otherwise I would order you to remain away."

"You'd dare to order me?"

"Certainly. You should know the scope of the agent's authority. It includes the right to order off the Reservation any one not a member of the tribe."

The girl smiled mockingly. "You forget I told you I am a quarterbreed."

"Marie!" remonstrated Vandervyn.

"Mind your own business!" she flashed back. "I am not ashamed that I'm a member of the tribe, and I don't care how soon he knows it, even if he is an officer of your little American Army."

She turned upon Hardy, flushed, defiant, haughty. "My mother was the granddaughter of Sitting Bull. What have you to say to that, Mr. West Pointer?"

"Nothing, Miss Dupont, unless——" he paused, smiled and continued—"unless it is to remark that I am glad the police are so near."

The girl's eyes flared with anger. With a swift movement she bent over and snatched her driving-whip from its socket on the dashboard. She straightened no less swiftly, and stood poised, the whip upraised to strike. Dupont's heavy jowl dropped. Vandervyn swung his rifle around, his large blue eyes glinting with eagerness. Hardy faced the girl with no change in his smile. Had his steady gaze wavered for an instant, she would have slashed him across the face.

"You—you!" she whispered. "Twit me with the treacherous killing of my great-grandfather, would you?"

"Treacherous? How is that?" he asked.

"He was murdered—by the police!" she cried. "You know it."

"I beg your pardon," he replied. "I had not the slightest idea of alluding to what to you must be a painful occurrence. But, since you have referred to it, I wish to say that you are misinformed. Sitting Bull was shot while resisting arrest. The police were acting under orders. The man who shot the chief had first been shot by one of the chief's men."

The scarlet that flamed in the girl's cheeks deepened to crimson. Her gaze wavered. Instead of striking Hardy, the whip lashed down across the backs of the team. The young broncos plunged and jumped forward; they whirled the buckboard down the slope away from the river.

The girl's companions jerked their ponies about to gallop after her. Hardy spoke to them in peremptory command: "Wait! Dupont, I shall ask you to bring my baggage from the railroad. Here come the police. I shall detail four of their number to go with you as escort."

"We don't need no escort," said Dupont. "Do we, Mr. Van?"

"They will go in place of Mr. Vandervyn," explained Hardy. "I must ask him to accompany me to the Agency."

The young man looked the new agent up and down with an insolent smile on his handsome, boyish face. "What if I do not choose to go back?"

"It would put me to the necessity of finding a new chief clerk," countered Hardy.

The other evidently had expected an arbitrary order. He bit his lip. It was plain that he was puzzled over the adroitly worded reply. Was it a threat, or merely a statement due to misapprehension?"

"If you wish to resign," added the captain, "may I request you to telegraph for your successor to be immediately appointed and ordered here?"

"I'd resign quick enough if I could," said Vandervyn. "You're the last man I'd let order me around if I could help it."

Hardy turned to the stolid-faced Indian trader.

"Please remember my baggage. You had better ride on after your daughter. The escort will soon follow."

CHAPTER IV.
CONFIDENCES.

DUPONT looked from Vandervyn's sullen face to the firm jaw and keen eyes of Hardy.

"All right, Cap!" he said. "If Marie won't haul out your outfit, I'll do it my own self."

"Very well," replied Hardy.

Dupont spurred his pony and galloped off down the slope. Hardy started down into the coulee without looking about. Vandervyn cast a side glance at the stiffish back of his superior official, and stared longingly after the lissome girlish figure in the buckboard. Yet he ended by wheeling his pony to follow the thorobred.

The rescuers from the Agency had reined in their sweating ponies. They straggled down the gulley at a walk, eight short-haired Indian policemen in blue uniform, and a tall, loose-lipped young halfbreed in ordinary frontier clothes.

"You're too late, Charlie," called Vandervyn. "Captain Hardy climbed the butte, and the whole bunch hit out."

"Soldiers?" queried the halfbreed.

The Flight Was So Unexpected That the Fugitive Had Been Borne a Good Fifty Yards Before the Indians Opened Fire on Him.

"No, he's alone—our new agent," explained Vandervyn. "Captain, this is Charlie Redbear, our issue clerk and interpreter."

"Interpreter?" repeated Hardy. "Redbear, do any of the police understand English?"

"No, sir, only a few words," mumbled the halfbreed.

"Tell them I am a captain of the horse soldiers—the Longknives. I have been sent here to be the agent."

Redbear interpreted in musical Lakotah, accompanying his words with swift signs. The swarthy policemen grunted approvingly, and their leader rolled out a sonorous reply. The halfbreed interpreted mechanically: "He says your eye is straight. He says they see you are a chief. He says they are ready to trail and fight the Indians whose hearts are bad."

"They are not to pursue the party," ordered Hardy. "I shall call a council of the chiefs, and ascertain the cause of the tribal unrest. Tell them."

Redbear hesitated, and looked uncertainly at Vandervyn. The chief clerk spoke to him in sharp reproof: "Do as you're told, Charlie. Captain Hardy is now in command of the Reservation."

The halfbreed stared in astonishment, but hastened to interpret. At once the faces of the policemen became stolid. They cast covert glances at Vandervyn. Without seeming to notice their sudden change of manner, Hardy selected four to act as escort to the Indian trader and his daughter. The rest of the party followed him back up the gulley.

Hardy waited for Vandervyn to come alongside, and gravely remarked: "I wish to express my regret, Mr. Vandervyn, that my detail here has deprived you of your expected promotion."

Vandervyn's small mouth curved with a cynical smile, but softened to a more agreeable expression as he met the other's gaze. "You admit it?" he muttered.

"Having accepted the detail, I cannot now ask to be relieved," said Hardy. "But the extra pay was not one of the inducements. Permit me to suggest that arrangements can be made to divert to your salary the amount in excess of my regular compensation as an officer."

The offer was as unexpected as it was generous. Vandervyn flushed, bit his lip, and replied half inaudibly: "You needn't think just because——." No, that's not quite——. You may mean well, but that's no excuse——."

"My fault, sir. Pardon me," apologized Hardy.

Vandervyn nodded. "You now understand that I'm not one of the common run of Indian Service employes. I was slated for attache to our embassy at the Court of Saint James—celebrated the coming event with some friends, and wound up by heaving a brick thru a window of the White House. Uncle shipped me out here until the storm should blow over. I got this instead of London."

"Best thing for you."

"You think so? I've been six months in this God-forsaken jumping-off place. I wouldn't have stayed six days if it hadn't been for Marie."

"Miss Dupont seems to be a very spirited young woman," dryly commented Hardy.

"Wait till you see her put on dog. She was three or four years at a convent in Ottawa. They must have farmed her out as a parlor-maid in some select British family. She can give a perfect imitation of a real lady—when she chooses."

"Yes?" said Hardy.

"You'd take it for the sure-nuff article," went on Vandervyn. "And that's not all. She can cook like an angel. Says she took a course in Domestic Science. But it must be hereditary. I'll give odds, one of her paternal ancestors was a French chef. And the way she has with men! Even this halfbreed Redbear thinks he is in the running. Nogen was mad over her. He even would have married her. But he was not a man of family or culture. Fancy Jake Dupont for a father-in-law. Only think, his squaw died five or six years ago. That was when he sent the girl to Ottawa."

Hardy looked at the mountains and changed the subject: "May I ask you to give the particulars of the killing of Mr. Nogen?"

Vandervyn's eyelids drooped low and opened again in a wide, guileless stare. "There's little to tell. Nogen and I and Redbear were riding into the mountains. We met the murderer. He and Nogen quarreled. He shot Nogen—killed him. Then Redbear and I fired, and one of us got him—we don't know which of us it was. That's all. You'll find it in the coroner's report. I kept a copy in the office at the Agency."

"Strange that an Indian should attack a white man that way," observed Hardy. "Was the cause ascertained?"

Vandervyn twisted the tip of his blond mustache. "Well, it may be all talk, but I gather that the trouble was over this ore buying. Nogen thought it a good thing to encourage. The chiefs felt ugly because the goods were not paid to them instead of to the laborers—the bucks and squaws who dug the ore, you know. The chiefs stirred up a lot of bad blood. No doubt they instigated the murder. They want to boss the tribe their own way."

"Let us trust that we shall have them in hand before Fall."

"Fall?" echoed Vandervyn. "That shuts me out of my promotion."

"You may receive the appointment of attache."

"Perhaps I don't want it just now. You forget Marie."

The gravity of the officer's face hardened to sternness. "Mr. Vandervyn, kindly bear in mind that, as agent of this Reservation, I am in charge of the moral as well as the material welfare of every member of the tribe."

Vandervyn's voice shook with passion: "D—n your impudence! I'll have you understand you're not talking to one of your roughneck recruits. My ancestors were gentlemen before yours were ever heard of."

"I regret that you do not seem to have inherited their gentlemanly manners," came back the cool rejoinder.

Vandervyn's reddened face went crimson. The veins of his forehead began to swell. But with a strong effort he repressed his anger and forced a smile. "You went me one better, Hardy. I throw down."

The officer responded with instant sympathy:

"I see no reason why we should not become friends and work together for the good of the tribe."

"It's a go," agreed Vandervyn, and began a lively conversation on official society in the national capital.

Hardy had taken out his field-glasses to peer at the herd of cattle, now only a mile off to the left. In the midst of it he remarked: "Those are white cowboys. Has the owner of that herd permission to graze on Indian land?"

Vandervyn took the glasses, looked, and answered: "I know those fellows. They're coming from down the river to deliver the beef herd. That's why they didn't hear our shooting. As soon as they deliver the beeves, Indian herders will be placed in charge."

Hardy nodded and put his mare into a trot. The party had topped the rise between the river and Sioux Creek. As they rounded the base of the spur ridge on the far side, Redbear rode up on Hardy's right, and pointed to a small cabin among the quaking asps in the milewide curve of the stream to the left.

"See my house, sir," he said.

"Looks well built," remarked Hardy, his field-glasses at his eyes. "Quite new, I see. You have still to put dirt on this corner of the roof."

"And to put a squaw inside," added Vandervyn.

The halfbreed's jaw muscles twitched, but he did not look away from Hardy. "I got a letter from my sister Oinna. She says she can't stay at school. She says she will die if they make her stay at school. I want her to come and cook for me till I get married."

"How old is she?"

"More than seventeen. She is sick to come. She says she will die."

"Very well. But you must take good care of her until she is married."

"Yes, sir. I've got a lot of money," replied the halfbreed, with the proneness of a weak nature to boast. "I've got almost——"

"——Almost enough to buy you two squaws," cut in Vandervyn.

Redbear started to speak, caught the other's eye, and reined in his pony. Hardy did not notice this. His eye was busy taking in the natural features of the beautiful valley.

When they came to the slope of the bench, or terrace, Vandervyn noticed the intent look of his companion, and inquired: "Well, what do you think of it? This is the Dupont place over here."

Hardy glanced at the large double cabin a hundred yards off to the right of the road. The broad front porch gave it a homelike appearance. The two cabins before him were very small. Beyond them stood the big Agency warehouse. Its overhanging upper story showed that it had been built for use as a blockhouse, but the many windows and doors afterward cut in the lower walls had rendered it less defensible than one of the cabins. The only persons in sight were the two Indian police who had been left in charge by Redbear.

"Well?" repeated Vandervyn.

"Not an easy place to defend," said Hardy. "Where is the office and the guardhouse?"

"The office is in the near front corner of the warehouse. The police quarters are in the other end. You see the white tops of the tepees over there across the creek? Most of the relations of the police camp near the Agency. This first cabin is Nogen's—yours, I should say. The second cabin is mine."

"Your quarters? May I ask you for a bite of lunch as soon as I have rubbed down my mare?"

"I board with the Duponts, but I can scare up a cold lunch," said Vandervyn.

After lunch, tho still weary from his long ride, Hardy put in the rest of the day inspecting the Agency property and examining the accounts of the two clerks. Redbear swept out the cabin and brought wood for the dilapidated old cooking-stove. At twilight Hardy moved in with a roll of clean issue

blankets to spread in the wooden bunk built across one end of the room.

Vandervyn brought bacon, coffee, crackers and canned food, and the new agent cooked supper with the skill of an old campaigner. After they had eaten, the chief clerk produced cigars in anticipation of a social evening. But Hardy was so drowsy that he asked to be excused. The moment he was alone, he laid his rifle and automatic pistol in the bunk, blew out the candle, and tumbled in on his blankets, without troubling to close either the door or the one small window.

CHAPTER V.

A MATTER OF WEIGHT.

NOTHING disturbed the newcomer during the night. After ten hours he awoke to find the sun streaming thru his window. He sprang out of his bunk, and perceived the tall, lithe figure and handsome face of Vandervyn, who had been lounging in the open doorway.

"Good morning," he said. "I have overslept."

"Not much," Vandervyn reassured him. "I've been waiting to breakfast with you. If you care to try your hand again, I'll put up the makings."

"Are there any women about the Agency?"

"Not even a squaw."

"Then I shall first go down to the creek for a dip. You might start the fire."

Vandervyn nodded. Yet when Hardy returned from his bath the cabin was empty and the fire not even laid. He had the firebox of the stove full of crackling twigs and sticks before Vandervyn sauntered back, with the nonchalant explanation: "Couldn't find a match anywhere. Had to go all the way to the warehouse."

He at once volunteered his services. But his every movement seemed to result only in a misplacement of some article or an interference with Hardy's method of procedure. Laughing at his own awkwardness, he persisted in his attempts to help. After considerable confusion and delay Hardy at last finished with the cooking, and dished up the meal.

Vandervyn now became as leisurely as he had been active. He dawdled over his food, took a second serving of everything, and sought to draw Hardy into a detailed account of his Moro campaign. The officer was terse, almost laconic in his answers. Vandervyn continued to question him with persistent sociability.

At last, unable longer to restrain his impatience, Hardy excused himself, and rose to go out. Vandervyn promptly followed him. He found Hardy gazing down the valley toward the corral on the far side of the creek.

"Hello!" he remarked. "I see they are bringing the beef herd into the valley."

Hardy stepped inside, and came out with his saddle. He started down the slope to where his mare was picketed in the creek bottom.

"Wait, Captain," said Vandervyn. "Let me call one of the police to saddle up for you."

"No, thanks," was the curt reply.

The chief clerk shrugged his shapely shoulders, slipped around the end of the cabin, and sprinted for the stable. Behind the far end of the low brush building his pinto pony stood in readiness for him, saddled and bridled. He jumped into the saddle and dug in his spurs. The pinto bolted down the slope of the terrace into the creek bottom.

Vandervyn rode straight across the creek, but, once clear of the thickets, turned toward the corral. A moment later the thorobred came trotting thru the brush a short distance downstream. Her rider was gazing in the direction of the corral. Vandervyn jerked his pony to an abrupt stop, but as suddenly eased off on the cruel curb and again swung his spurs into the pinto's flanks.

"Hi, Captain!" he called. "Pull up a bit. Thought I'd ride out with you."

Hardy reined in until Vandervyn was alongside, and then gave the mare her head. As they swung up on a rise, the chief clerk narrowed his eyes to peer ahead at the compact herd of cattle near the corral.

"Why, it looks as if they are ready to deliver," he remarked. "They may have brought Charlie along as they came up the valley past his house."

"Has it been the practice here for the issue clerk to receive the beeves?" inquired Hardy.

"I presume so. He did it the last time. Nogen and I had gone to town."

Hardy made no comment. The mare trotted along over the dry turf, rapidly lessening the distance to the corral. As they came alongside the end of the big enclosure Hardy drew down to a jog trot and peered thru the bars at the cattle already delivered. More than half the herd had been weighed and passed thru the branding-chute into the corral.

"Scrubs—all young," he commented.

"I am told they are a fine breed of cattle," remarked Vandervyn.

Redbear stood bent over the open scale-box, ready to weigh the bunch of steers as soon as they had been barred in the cage-like pen.

Hardy had swung around back of Redbear to where a dismounted cowboy was stirring the fire in which the branding-irons were being heated. As the man rose, Hardy asked him brusquely.

"Are you in charge here for the contractor?"

The puncher looked him up and down with an evil leer and replied: "What if I am?"

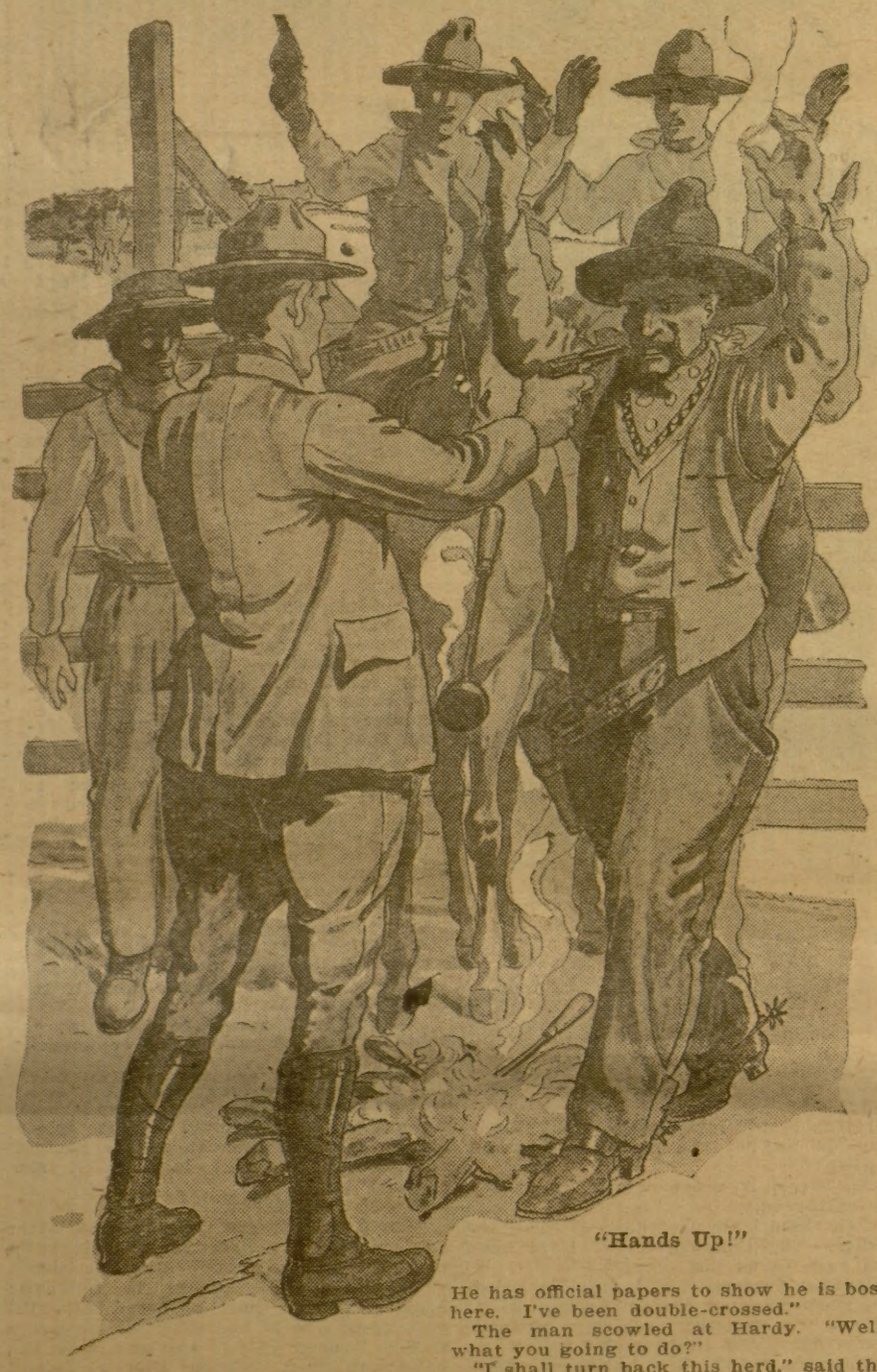
"These cattle run small."

"Her'fords stand low. Mebbe you're used to longhorns."

"They are mostly 2-year-olds—scrubs at that," asserted Hardy.

"Well, what of it? Who the h—l are you, anyway?" truculently demanded the cowboy.

The released cattle bolted out of the scale-pen into the branding-chute. Hardy



"Hands Up!"

faced toward the issue clerk and called out: "What did that lot weigh?"

Redbear was engrossed in marking down the figures in his official tally-book. He called back without looking around or even raising his eyes from the book: "Eleven, four, thirty."

"Eleven thousand, four hundred!" ejaculated Hardy. "Impossible!"

"Her'fords stand low but stocky," said the puncher.

Hardy paid no heed to him. He was looking sternly at Redbear. The half-breed had twisted around and was gaping at him, slackjawed. There was guilt and fear in his furtive eyes and cringing shoulders. Hardy dismounted. Redbear turned to put his hand on the adjusting mechanism of the scales.

"Hands off! Stand aside!" There was a note in Hardy's voice that riveted the attention of every one and caused the issue clerk to jump away from the scales. Hardy went forward to the scalebox and started to move an adjustment weight.

"Here, you!" called one of the mounted punchers. "Leave them scales alone!"

"I'd like to weigh my mare," said Hardy, his mouth set in a grim smile. "At about what will she tip the beam?"

The man faced away, muttering curses, and his mate chuckled openly at his discomfiture. The fellow in charge of the branding-irons scowled at the intruder and retorted with marked insolence: "This here ain't no hawss-weighing."

As he spoke he slapped the mare on the back with his hat. The next instant his right hand and the right hands of his mates dropped to the holsters. The high-spirited mare had plunged under the wanton blow and was bounding violently aside. Her rider had not flung the reins over her head, cowboy fashion, when he dismounted. She was free to bolt. All except Hardy looked to see her do so. Instead, she wheeled around Redbear and came to a stand beside her master, quivering but docile.

"Who the h—l are you?" The branding-iron man repeated his truculent query.

"Captain Hardy, United States Cavalry, acting agent of this Reservation," was the terse reply.

Even the insolent leader was taken aback. He looked toward Vandervyn. The chief clerk met the glance with an aggravating smile, and called jeeringly: "You'll have to knuckle under to him. He has official papers to show he is boss here. I've been double-crossed."

The man scowled at Hardy. "Well, what you going to do?"

"I shall turn back this herd," said the new agent.

"All of 'em?"

"Yes."

"Say, you ain't got any gall, have you? How about the contract?"

Hardy called, without turning his head: "Mr. Vandervyn, may I trouble you to bring me the beef contract?"

"Whatever you order," ironically replied the chief clerk. He swung his pony around close to the puncher farthest from Hardy and muttered in passing: "You fellows lose your rake-off if you let him bluff you. I am agent if we get rid of him."

Touched with the spur, the pinto jumped and started off on a lope. The two mounted cowboys drifted over beside their leader and began talking with him in undertones. Redbear began to edge off to one side. When he was several paces away from Hardy, he spoke to the five stolidly on-looking policemen. With no sign of surprise the Indians started to ride around the scattering cattle of the herd still outside the corral.

"Halt those men, Redbear!" ordered Hardy.

"What's the use?" scoffed the unmounted puncher. "We can plug the whole bunch and you, too."

"Give my order," commanded Hardy.

Redbear no longer dared to hesitate. He called out a guttural word. The policemen halted. Hardy stepped toward the cowboys.

"Who is your owner?" he inquired.

"You'd like to know, wouldn't yuh?" mocked the man to whom Vandervyn had spoken.

"I shall know soon. It is in the contract."

"Well, what of it? We've got this beef herd here for delivery, and we've made delivery. Yuh needn't think we're going to back up. You'll read that contract the way we see it. Savvy?"

"I shall hold to the exact terms of the contract," said Hardy.

"You big stiff! Think you can bluff us, do you?" sneered the man on foot, and he picked up one of the branding-irons.

"You will not brand any more of these cattle," said Hardy.

"Just you watch me," rejoined the puncher. He raised the iron and held the sparkling, white-hot brand toward the officer. "Now, you little tin soldier, git out of the way, or I'll give you something to show you belong to the Indian Bureau."

He stepped forward until the glowing brand was within a few inches of Hardy's face. Hardy did not flinch a hairbreadth. His resolute face turned from the threatener to the grinning mounted punchers, and from them to the Indian police. The corners of his mouth twitched in a quick smile.

"Better put up your hands," he advised.

Swiftly the three glanced about at the Indians, the hands of the mounted men dropping to their hips. They saw the five policemen looking on, stolid and inoffensive. And in the same instant that they perceived the trick which had been played upon them, they heard a peremptory command: "Hands up!"

The metallic ring in Hardy's voice sent the hands of the two mounted men skyward. The third man had sufficient recklessness to wait until he had looked at Hardy. He saw the muzzle of a long-barreled automatic pistol pointed between his eyes. The branding iron fell from his grasp and his hands shot upward.

"Don't shoot!" he grunted.

There was a moment's pause. The man's glaring gaze shifted to something behind Hardy, and one corner of his slit mouth drew up, exposing the canine tooth. Quick as a flash, Hardy circled around, to bring Redbear as well as the police and his prisoners within his range of vision. The halfbreed hastily lifted his hand from his hip. Hardy beckoned to him, and spoke in the same metallic voice: "Come here, Redbear."

The halfbreed obeyed, his swarthy face mottled, his knees shaking. Hardy pointed at the punchers. "Disarm those men."

Redbear hesitated. He knew the reputation of the trio. The humorous one grinned at him and relieved his tragic dilemma with a cheerful, "Hurry up, Charlie! I'm tired of this here stretching."

"Well, if you don't blame me," mumbled the halfbreed, and he gathered in the three revolvers.

"Unload them and lay them on the scale box," ordered Hardy, as he thrust his pistol inside his coat. "When this matter is settled, you will return them to their owners."

"Say, you're white," commented the humorous puncher. "Your little show costs me a hundred, but it's worth the price."

"Collect the herd while I'm waiting for the chief clerk," directed Hardy.

The two mounted men at once rode off, one chuckling, the other sullen. The third was black with rage. But he was beaten, and he knew it. He waddled over to his pony and rode away after his mates.

They were still engaged in bunching the herd when Vandervyn came loping back from the Agency. The direction from which he approached enabled him to see Hardy and Redbear while still some distance away. When he reached them, his look was as frank and guileless as a child's.

Hardy took the contract and glanced at the backing. "So," he said. "These are Dupont's cattle."

"Hadn't they told you?" replied Vandervyn.

"No." Hardy skimmed thru the contract, and returned to a paragraph in the midst. "I see that it is optional for the agent to accept young stock at a reduced price. I shall turn back all that have not yet been branded. The others will be reweighed and accepted in accordance with the terms of the contract."

"How do you know that Dupont will agree to that?" asked Vandervyn.

"He agreed when he signed this contract. The scales have been adjusted. Call his men to test them."

At a signal from Vandervyn the punchers rode in. But they refused to examine the scales or to take any part in the reweighing. At this Hardy promptly ordered them to drive the herd of unbranded steers down the valley and off the Reservation. With them he sent a policeman to see that they obeyed and to return their revolvers when they had crossed Wolf River.

The battle is on between the elements of right and wrong. At the meeting of the chiefs with Hardy trouble begins—and Charlie and Vandervyn are at the bottom of it.

Troubles pile up for the hero in the second installment of

ROSE OF THE DESERT

By E. W. Bateman

Read This First

MARION BURKE, a cattle rancher near Durango, Mexico, is captured by the soldiers of an Aztec princess, known as "Rose of the Desert," because of her beauty. Burke is questioned concerning the strength in soldiers and food supply of Valdez, a plundering tyrant who holds the city. Burke agrees to help a member of the princess' band ascertain the facts. In Durango Burke finds an aged man who has just been let out of Valdez's prison. Burke befriends the aged man and sends him to his cattle ranch. Later, Valdez finds that the old man was released by mistake, and offers a reward for the capture of Burke on a charge of spiriting the old man away. The man sent by the princess to spy on Valdez turns traitor and tries to get the reward, but Burke knocks him down, escapes to his ranch, and invites another bandit to come from the hills and live upon the ranch in order to keep Valdez and his army away. But the bandit from the mountains connives with Valdez and betrays Burke into his hands. The old man whom Burke had befriended dies, and leaves Burke some strange Aztec scrolls. After being wounded, Burke escapes the ranch, which is destroyed.

The first installment of this story appeared in the Ledger No. 32, dated Aug. 10. You can obtain back copies either thru our agents or news dealers, or from office of publication.

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CHAPTER V.

MARIANO JOINS A WOMAN'S ARMY.

"HE WILL live, my Princess, because he wills to live," said a grave voice above me, and I opened my eyes weakly.

One of The Two stood above me, his wrinkled face coming out strangely in my vision after what had seemed an age of restless, distorted dreams. At the foot of the rude cot on which I lay stood the girl whom I had met in the Madre. She smiled kindly at me, without speaking. I glanced about me and knew in a moment that I was in a high-walled cave, well lighted and rudely but comfortably equipped.

"You have twice proven a poor informer, Don Mariano," she said finally, in English. "Your companion did not return from Durango at all. We were in the mountains above you on the night of the raid, and two of my men rescued you in the hope that you would tell of it; but you have been two weeks fighting death. You have won a wonderful battle, senor," she said, another and rarer smile lighting her features to full beauty.

"I wished to live," I whispered weakly, a sudden rush of memory telling me all that night's story of El Vallejo.

"A thoro wreck, senor," she answered, a bit sadly. "You were basely treated by this Cordova. You have nothing left save your life and your horse and one man—a wonderful horse and a wonderful man, truly. He risked his life perhaps a dozen times to save that horse and bring him to you, Don Mariano. He has watched your doorway, since then, as a mother watches a babe. I wish for a dozen such as he."

"Manuel," I called in my strongest voice.

It was little better than the first whisper, but the Indian lad leaped into the room and dropped by my side. Silently we gripped hands. Then he arose without a word and resumed his watch. The girl and the old man had watched with interest the little play. Then the latter came to my side with a cup.

"Drink," he said, and I obeyed without a question. Then I slept.

It took me two weeks to regain my strength and harden that strength to a day in the saddle. The bullet wound had been a clean drill thru the body, and it had sapped much of my strength. But during all that time I was studying the queer company into which I had fallen for the second time, and thinking in spare moments of my future.

There seemed to be in the force about six hundred men, fairly well armed, and more careful of ammunition than the average Mexican outfit. Of course, there were no machine guns or artillery, no side arms except such pistols as the individual may have picked up here and there. There was an air of discipline about that camp, tho, which could not be fathomed. It did not belong with a Mexican force. I attributed it to the splendid personality of the woman, and the influence of The Two.

To my future there seemed no answer. Financially I was nearly ruined, tho a ghost of my holdings might have been revived had I not been a political refugee. And with my returning strength there grew two things within me—an obsession to kill Jose Valdez and an interest in the girl-princess who led the force which had rescued me.

It was certain that I knew little of her. I had been in the cave which she made headquarters four weeks, and yet I had never seen her issue an order, or talk to any one except The Two. They were a mystery to me. That band revolved about her destinies, I was sure, and yet not sure. It fascinated me. At every chance I talked to her.

She was more than kind to me. In some way she accepted me on a plane she accorded no other in the camp except The Two—that of an equal. She spoke English, Spanish and Indian, all with ease, and tho she did not tell me when, or where, she had traveled almost as much as I. We had much to talk in common, and it seemed to delight her.

One afternoon we were alone in the cave together. She was a beautiful woman, and I could not help but stare at the touch of dull rose in her cheeks, and the softness of her face and eyes.

"I wonder if I am getting the bandit fever?" I asked myself once, after I had gazed at her until her eyes fell. She seemed to read my thoughts.

"Senor, I have thought much of you," she said soberly, after gazing at the stone floor for a moment. "Has it occurred to you that perhaps you might be troublesome to me? You have said nothing of from where you came, or where you will go? Can I let you go freely?"

She was serious at last, and I felt my answer important. I threw caution to the winds and answered simply.

"Senorita, there is nothing left for me," I said quietly. "My home is in ashes, my stock driven off, my pelados scattered. I have now but one aim in life. I shall have vengeance on Jose Valdez, the cause of it, tho it takes twenty years of my life."

I threw back my shoulders and looked her squarely in the eye. She gave me glance for glance, and laughed joyously.

"Oh, Don Mariano, that pleases me, indeed!" she cried. "We have common enemy in that man. Senor, do you remember my first meeting with you? I asked you to come to me if you ever desired to become a soldier. You have but one way of realizing your wish. Come with me!

"I need such a man as you, Don Mariano," she continued, without giving me a chance to answer. "Without you perhaps a great venture will fail. Its prime opponent is your arch enemy. What more could you wish? Join my little army and let me tell you more."

She was very human at that moment, less the princess and more the woman. Years of steady living at El Vallejo—years that had all but wiped out the memories of younger days in South America as a soldier of fortune—were swept away by an appealing hand. I sprang to her side and knelt upon one knee.

"I acknowledge thee, my Princess, as my liege lord, holder of the high justice, the middle and the low, to whom I shall pay just tribute, whose battles I shall wage, whose enemies shall be mine enemies, and whose alliances I shall respect——"

Her laugh again interrupted me, for she knew I was quoting some feudal oath of fealty which had found a place in my memory.

"And thou, Don Mariano, a good knight and true," she answered in keeping with my words, "shall be of my household, and shall lead mine armies to battle and to glory."

We were both serious enough when I bent lower and kissed her hand as it was extended.

"There is much for you to know, Don Mariano," she said, her voice ringing with comradeship. "Let us talk."

There was a new spirit which hovered over us as we sat at the entrance of the cave and, as a great red sun was setting, I became her man, in truth.

My Heart Held Wild Thoughts of Murder as I Looked at These Two Plotters Now Bending Over the Table.

CHAPTER VI.

SENOR MARIANO FEARS A TRAITOR.

"ABOUT this man Hansen," I was saying. "I do not understand fully just what part he plays in this thing."

She looked at me a full moment before she answered as if weighing my loyalty, and her answer, one against another.

"He is necessary, senor, to our success," she answered simply. "It is true that he has but a handful of men, but they are real soldiers, and he has machine guns. Without them we cannot capture Durango—and Jose Valdez."

I had the whole story of that band vividly told. Inez Matleteczin, daughter of a line of Aztec noblemen who were conquering Central America the same century in which William the Conqueror smote England, was seeking her just heritage and faced a battle with Jose Valdez for it.

It was an old story to me, these lost heritages in Mexico. I had chased many rainbows myself. It is a dull day in the southern Mexico states when one cannot dig up an Aztec prince or a descendant of Montezuma. Yet when for the first time I had run across the real thing, I realized the truth of her claim, as she told it simply, briefly.

Matletec, the first 'tzin (prince) of her line, had aided greatly in the conquering of the present province of Durango for the ancient Toltec-Aztec alliance. The province had developed wonderfully when he was placed in charge of it, and naturally his sons became rulers in line. It followed that the province kept pace with the wonderful development of the Aztec empire, and had produced much cattle and gold.

When the shock of Spanish invasion came to Mexico it did not extend at once to the far western section. For these provinces the blow was tempered by the period of occupation in which Cortez sought to gather all of the empire's gold. History knows that he gained great riches, but failed in the majority of instances in finding those wonderful hiding places into which the Montezumas dumped their gold. In a half century Aztec rule had disappeared and with it that of the Matleteczins. They held their lands, part of their wealth, but none of their prestige.

Four centuries it had taken to whittle away the holdings of the old 'tzin. Yet the girl stood at the very end of it all. She was the last of her great race, and gambling with the last of its wealth—like the noblewoman that she was—for the greater stake.

Along with the shadow of the once great heritage had come to her the weird story of a great hidden wealth of the time of the Spanish occupation. Beyond the fact that it lay within the city of Durango, and that she must occupy that place for at least a time, she would tell me nothing.

"That, senor, is a secret, locked in my heart by a most dreadful oath administered by my dying father. Only this I can tell you. Jose Valdez holds part of it, and we must capture him and wring it from his black heart." She glowed with all the fire of the South as she said it. "Without the part he knows I can do nothing. Without the part I know he can do nothing. I wish that I might tell you of all the things I have battled against to keep him from realizing my rights. After the ball of the June Fete of Roses it was marriage, prison or flight for me—and I chose the latter. I gathered every faithful man whom I knew and I shall fight now for my own."

"What does this Hansen know?" I had asked.

"Hardly as much as you," she had replied. "He knows the history of my family, and in a guarded way, I have told him that I shall recover something of my own. I can give you stronger assurance. Great wealth awaits me; you need not fear to follow me to your vengeance."

"I have no fear, my princess," I said quietly, for I had believed every word she had told me. "Only I cannot see how a freebooter like he should agree with you to attack a fortified town unless he had definite gain in sight. From what race does he come?"

The question struck her as peculiar, for she gave me another long glance before answering.

"Senor, he speaks as many tongues as you," she answered. "He claims to be a Norwegian. He has lived for years in South America. He has many white men with him in his band, and they are very good fighters. We must have them with

us," she finished as if defending an attack I had made against an ally.

Something in her talk of him struck me as being strangely familiar—seemed to hint at some one I had known before.

"What manner of man is he?" I asked, tho I knew I was taking long chances on angering her. But she answered patiently.

"A slender, blond man, about 35, and very fair of skin, senor. I cannot see why the sun has not changed it. He does not seem strong, but he deceives one. The men say that he can break a horseshoe with his hands, and he is quick as an ocelot. Do you know him, senor?"

The description was quite enough for me! Did I know him? Everybody on the eastern coast of South America knew Swede Hansen and his gang. They were soldiers of fortune who came high, with their wages paid in advance. What was he doing here, eight hundred miles from his stamping ground, with his coterie along, too, and no one putting up for it? I decided that I would like to see him at once, and try and get a line on him. Yet I felt that she did not join me in my distrust of him and on the moment I decided to play a lone hand.

"I do not know him at all," I said. "I just wanted to learn what I could of him before our first meeting."

CHAPTER VII.

SENTENCED TO BE SHOT AT SUNDOWN.

IT WAS queer to me, after I became a full-fledged lieutenant for the "Rose of the Desert," and her men came to look without question to me as their leader, how the idea that I wanted to know more of Swede Hansen clung to my mind.

I had been busy for two weeks whipping that force into something like fighting shape. I had plenty of experience, for I had participated in several revolutions with more or less rank, years before while I wandered up the South American coast. They were good material. An Indian knows how to obey and he learns more readily than a peon how to fight intelligently. I soon had them formed into something like two squadrons of light cavalry, poorly equipped, but quite willing. Then I determined to try some of them out. With Manuel as my top-sergeant, I selected a troop of about forty and set out to ambush the road from Durango.

I had a double purpose in this. I wanted, if possible, to catch a small detachment of Valdez's troops outside the city and get some information as to the exact whereabouts of the munitions supplies of the capital's force, and also to give my outfit a chance to lick somebody easily. The last I knew would be a great help to morale.

We were singularly lucky. Not that we saw a fight, but I got one of the most valuable things in the world—a chance to visit Swede Hansen.

We had laid a perfect trap at the foot of Sierra Saledo, a foothill of the Madre. A long winding hill, at its peak, sprang up to the rock around a huge bowlder—one which would and did hide nearly fifty men. It was there that we were waiting when a lone horseman came around the curve. We surrounded him in a moment, and the poor fellow, terrified, threw up his hands.

"Search him, Manuel," I said, and I stood by to see the job well done.

My guess had been a good one. He was a courier for Jose Valdez, and he had two letters to Swede Hansen!

It was only after Manuel had threatened him with a fall over the cliffs, however, that he gave them up. My first impulse was to open them, but on second thought I refrained. Then came a new idea. I pondered over it but a moment.

"Manuel, do you suppose that I could find enough of anything to stain my face and hands deep brown?" I asked. He bowed silently, and, Indian-like, strode off alone. He came back only a few moments later with a queer-looking cluster of berries which I had often seen growing wild on the mountain side. He handed them to me and I squeezed one of them on my hand, to see a deep, red juice turn quickly to a dull brown. I followed this rule until my hands and face were stained a copper hue. Then I literally washed my hair in it, changing its fiery color to a very natural simulation of dull brown. I looked at Manuel, questioning, and he nodded. I knew then I would pass.

The next big question, to my mind, was whether I should attempt to read the letters Jose Valdez had sent by the messenger to Hansen, or risk delivery of a challenge which would get the bearer shot. Finally I decided that a letter unsealed would immediately bring suspicion on my head, so I put the bulkier of the two inside my vest, and opened the one which seemed of least importance. It was written in flowing Spanish, and read:

"The bearer may be trusted with anything of value to Jose Valdez. He is of my own household."

It was signed and sealed by the commandant as it stood, and I quickly realized the value of it. I gave it to Manuel.

"Never let that leave you until life has left your body," I said. "Never let yourself be taken if you have not returned it to me."

He bent and touched my open palm with his forehead, and then I drew him aside and explained briefly just what I intended to do. He was not to tell the Princess where I had gone, simply saying that I would be a few hours late. Then I changed horses with him, fearing that Black Sam might be known to some native with Hansen.

"And if I do not return a few hours later, Manuel, mind you well this," I said. "Move out of camp very quietly, bringing our two horses and two rifles. Camp in the third valley of the Saledo, near the spring where we hunted lions last year. Wait for me two weeks. If I do not come then, the two horses and the two rifles are yours. I shall not need them."

Then I turned and pointed at the prisoner they held, a peon of the better class, and one whom Valdez perhaps really trusted.

"Hold that man until nearly nightfall," I said. "And hourly tell him he may either return to his master saying all is well, and there was no writing this time, or that you will return to kill him if Valdez does not do it at once. Hourly, remember, until he has learned it well."

It was nearing sundown when I rode into La Ramora, the ranch where I had been told Hansen was camped. I rode boldly up to the sentry at the front of the rambling line of stone buildings, looking and acting as nearly as I could the part of a dull peon messenger. I had barely halted in front of the main ranch house when a man of some importance came out—I could tell that by the way a dozen or so loungers at the front sprang to attention. He waved to the sentry, who promptly let me pass. I swung down from the saddle stiffly at the side of the newcomer, and saluted crudely, in imitation, seemingly, of the men about me. He, a heavy-set, fair-haired and bronze-bearded man of 40, looked me over keenly, and asked in Spanish:

"Are you a bearer of the message?"

I looked at him stupidly for a moment, while his hard gray eyes bored into mine. Then I answered in Indian that I had not understood. He smiled good-naturedly, and repeated the question in the native lingo. It was my turn to smile, then. I bowed profoundly, as befitted my importance. He smiled again at this effort at native vanity.

"Come with me," he said, and snapped about face on his heel in a motion unmistakable and unforgettable. I almost cried out in surprise. "You never got that anywhere but on the parade ground near Potsdam," I said to myself. "German if I ever saw the goose-step."

I followed him across the patio and into the main living-room of the old ranch house. There I saw Hansen—I knew him to be the man of South American legend the moment my eyes fell on him. Slender, haughty, and moving with catlike quickness, the man was a born soldier. He had the air and the look of command about him, too, a thing which is acquired only by years of exercise of power.

"The messenger, sir," said the heavy-set man, with the quick salute of the regular soldier, and then I came forward. With my same clumsy salute I presented Hansen with the packet. He gave me no notice whatever. The seal was hastily broken and he was devouring the contents with the swift eye and training of a field officer reading orders. I was impressed as I watched him. There was something dangerous and sinister about his look of efficiency.

When he had finished he turned to his aide, giving me a single look which seemingly dismissed me from his mind. His face was alight in a way I had never seen a man's before.

"Ah, my good Langstedtt!" he cried. "He agrees! Agrees to everything I proposed, in my way. He makes but one proviso. He is to have the woman and the title. To me he leaves the power—and the gain."

It was fast-spoken German—almost too fast for my knowledge of it. But without a start of surprise I was able to follow his meaning fully. I hadn't spent two years in school at Stettin for nothing.

"This is almost too good to be true," I thought to myself, as I crouched there against the wall, striving with all my will power to preserve a stolid calm. "They are going to spill their whole pot of beans right where I can pick 'em up."

The two men were chuckling over the letter, as with heads close together, they read it again. Langstedtt laughed heartily, in a heavy Teuton way.

"It is practically arranged, then, Langstedtt," Hansen said, in a matter-of-fact way. "We will meet the Princess with our men, and shortly after that the deserter will come into camp with the story of Valdez coming with his whole force. We will ambush him, of course. When the attack is at its height we will turn the machine guns on these Indians. You know what will happen then."

Treason! Dirty treason! I could barely keep my pose, as I listened to him cold-bloodedly plotting to destroy the little force of the Princess.

"It will soon be finished," he continued in his rapid patter of German. "Valdez will dispatch a special guard to capture her. He is quite mad about the woman, I believe, and she is very important to our larger plans."

"What of her, tho?" Langstedtt queried. "Will she consent to act after such treatment? These women are devils when aroused," he added with a little grimace.

"Valdez has guaranteed to care for that," answered Hansen complacently. "He will wed her honestly, and it will be necessary for him to treat her well. I care nothing for that. It is the big plan that I am working for; the larger result, for which the seeds have been so carefully sown."

I sat there in a quiver, wondering if he would blunder on. His eyes, I could see thru the bare slits of my own I dared show, where burning with the fire of a fanatic.

"Langstedtt, we cannot fail!" he cried. "Think of it, and how carefully we have planned. We have our agents ready to spread the word as soon as Durango has been settled. Think how well it will sound. The empire of Mexico, under a Mexican empress, whose title to the throne is clear! It is madness for her not to take it willingly, after the time I have spent with her. These people will rally to her over night, and the revolution will be at an end. We have our men in South America ready to creep in to us as soon as we establish a base. We have German gold, and she will have plenty of her own. We have German guns, and soon we will have German men to fight and conquer these poor brutes. It will be but a short while then before we can have a force which will dominate all Mexico. Mexico, Langstedtt, with all its richest! Think of it, man. A German Mexico, ready and willing to spring at the throat of these d—d Yankees. And I shall be the power behind her throne!"

"Ah, goot, goot!" murmured Langstedtt. "Always, tho, I do not trust a woman. Suppose, even after the little plot, and she is in our power, she will not hear to it."

"A mere detail," said Hansen, airily. "She will be a mere figure-head—a popular idol to which we will rally political power. Valdez will be royal consort. Think of it, Langstedtt; that man a consort to an empress." Both of them laughed heartily. "But no matter," continued Hansen. "He will work well for us, and I shall furnish the brains."

A murderous rage was welling within me. They had given away their German plot to wreck the dreams and aims of that wonderful woman I had sworn to aid. They were bartering her away to a wretched Mexican as they would a slave. Her an empress over a people struggling to be free! A German Mexico indeed! Yet in the very madness of it I saw a danger which rolled up and mounted like a storm-cloud as I turned it over in my mind. German guns and German men! His phrases ran thru my head one by one. I, who had been thru South America, knew that a dream of a half-million German reserves was no dream at all—it was stern reality. As if it had been a shroud, my heart dropped its wanderlust and came home to its native land. It was America these wretches threatened; I was not for a moment deceived. Swede Hansen was really a German, and it was German gold which had brought him to Durango. Mexico a wolf at the flank of America; that was his dream. I, a single citizen of the United States, stood between him and his great plot.

And the girl! My teeth clinched hard. She had but one thought in her wish to take and hold Durango for a few hours. She wanted what was rightfully her own, and in a wild land, had adopted the only course to get it. In all our talks not once had dreams of conquest crept in, or ought but sorrow for burdened Mexico spoken. She was to be the unwilling tool of these spreaders of a mad kultur. And the empress-wife of Valdez. My heart held wild thoughts of murder as I looked at those two plotters now bending over the table.

For Hansen was writing, hurriedly. It was his answer, I knew, to Valdez, doubtless giving directions when and where to perpetrate his share of the rotten scheme. Without looking up he called to me sharply, in German:

"Attention, courier!"

I often look back upon that moment as marking the greatest blunder of my life. For I sprang to his side without question, to a command given in German!

Hansen, the great plotter, the great thinker, paid me no heed, but I saw Langstedtt snap erect and his eyes fill with amazement and anger.

"Ach, Mein Gott! But this is madness!" he cried to Hansen. "Here is a pelado who does not speak Spanish, but who comprehends commands in German. Heinrich! Wetter! Waldstein! The doors. This man is no messenger; he is a spy."

My dash for liberty was too late. Three brawny Germans held the way and despite my whirlwind attack they bore me back into the room and onto the floor. Fearing sudden death, I surrendered quietly and was brought before Hansen.

He was literally glowing with fury—more perhaps over the fact that I had almost outwitted him than at the knowledge that I was a spy. I stood quietly as I could, tho I knew full well that the next hour might see my death.

"Since you are so clever, my friend, and understand German so well," he finally gritted out, "I will end your life in German. Not knowing from whence you came or whom you serve, I shall consign you to the whole earth, with the vultures as my agents. Heinrich, this man dies at sundown tomorrow!"

And as I was being led away I heard him storming out commands for another messenger to Valdez.

CHAPTER VIII.

"ROSE OF THE DESERT" CAPTURED.

FROM a tiny square of light which answered as a window for the tiny adobe hut where I was a prisoner, I looked out on what Hansen had said would be my last day. It added nothing to such a memorable occasion to see him ride away with his whole band of cut-throats—that is, except those who were my guard and execution squad. They were in charge of Heinrich, the burly German who had helped overpower me the night before. I knew I could not change him one iota from his commands the way things stood. He was the brutal, stoical Teuton, and a trained soldier of fortune. I was the loser—had nothing to offer except perhaps a little gold, a chance of recapture and with it certain death. I had little hope from Heinrich.

The bitterness of my fate was nothing to my own self-contempt. I knew only too well where Hansen had gone. He had already entered into a pact with Valdez, tho he was going to betray the Princess. And not even Manuel would be there to testify as to my disappearance. I appeared to be the commonest of deserters; Hansen would see that I looked at my worst.

And that wonderful girl was lost—lost for me. I realized that I loved her; that I had loved her since that day in the cave when our long talk had been ended and I had sworn allegiance to her. What a foolish blunder I had made, at the very moment of a crowning triumph! I hid my face on my arms, my mind a blank, as I wearily went over in my mind for the thousandth time that final scene—that command Hansen had given in German, and the foolish answer I had given, immediate obedience.

I wondered what would be the outcome of the battle brewing somewhere over those hills, fully forty miles away. Would those brave and faithful Indians be able to save her, even if they were defeated? Somehow I knew they would not. If they had direction, but not disorganized, as I knew they would be, under the treacherous attack of Hansen's machine guns.

It was nearing noon when Heinrich came to the door. "Would you like food?" he asked, not unkindly. He evidently regarded me in the same light as a very ill patient in a hospital.

"No food, Heinrich," I answered in German. "Only a drink of water and a little fruit of some kind."

He bowed as if taking orders from a superior. In a few moments one of the other men returned with water and grapes, and I ate a few of them. "He is a cool one!" I heard the new man mutter as he passed Heinrich just outside the door. "Ach! I believe he is German," answered another.

Was there some chance? My two years in Germany were not ill-spent, I thought, no matter how I had hated them, and fought the overbearing students from Heidelberg who swaggered about Berlin on the holidays I had spent there. A dozen half-baked plans scurried thru my head, but were immediately discarded. I was not trifling with Mexican jailers, I had to remind myself. And my jailers were not trifling with Mexican masters, either, and I knew they knew it.

I was still puzzling over my plight when I saw down the road a typical peddler of mescal and pulque, much like the "blind pigs" of prohibition states in the United States. Two goatskin jars were fastened on the back of a donkey, followed by the owner—a dirty and ragged Indian—of uncertain years. I watched him drive into the enclosure and approach the soldiers grouped about the door, grinning uncertainly. Then, in quavering tones and halting Spanish, he proclaimed his wares.

Heinrich looked at him sourly. I could see him as he eyed the vender. As for the others they paid him little heed. "Why is the fool asking us to buy?" one finally growled. "We have seen no gold in weeks."

Here was a God-given chance! I hastened to take it.

Rapping on the window, I called to Heinrich softly. He was at the door in a moment.

"Why should good men thirst and I have gold I shall not need long?" I asked. "Take it and buy for your comrades." I gave him three pieces, enough to buy the whole supply. "Drink," I said simply, as he stuttered forth his thanks. "And tell them that a man about to die wishes brave men no ill luck."

As I had suspected, shouts of joy greeted the novel gift. The goatskins were soon flowing, the fiery mescal and the smooth-flowing pulque mingling in a merry struggle for first favor. They drank my health—"a poor joke" I thought to myself—and then to the success of the "empire." Again I called Heinrich.

"Tell that old pack of bones that he hasn't enough wine for real men with bottom," I said. "Tell him I said be off for more; no doubt he lives near.

Tell him there is more gold, and that I wish a glass of very clear pulque."

Heinrich hurried out and gave the order, amid more shouts. My popularity increased each moment. Leaving the two goatskins, now more than half empty, the native hurried off. He was back within an hour with four. I handed out six gold pieces to Heinrich, and every one of my death guard had the novel experience of making merry at my expense.

For hours, as they plied themselves with the fiery native liquor, I watched them. Truly, they were brave men! They attacked the demon rum with all their native force and it took six goatskins to make eight of them show signs of drunkenness. But one thing I knew and waited for: mescal drunkenness is culminative. Once you are thoroly drunk the spree increases rather than decreases, after your brain once warns you that it is slipping. I waited, and not in vain. As the sun slowly moved nearer the horizon in the West I made my plan—desperate tho it was—on that mescal's work.

It was nearer dusk than sundown when Heinrich staggered to my door and ordered me out.

"My good friend, we are sorry," he mumbled thickly, smiling vacantly as tho it was a good joke, too. "But we must shoot you now. Come along."

I came without question, and that execution squad was all that I could wish for. Gone was all the snap and precision on which the German prides himself. They were laughing boisterously and all of them were uncertain of their footing.

"Heinrich, there is but one thing upon which I insist," I said. "It was promised me by your captain before he left. I want to die as all brave men die; fighting to get away from death; I claim 'ley fuga.' It has been granted by your leader."

I dominated him then, for I had changed my tone until it was as stern as a drill master's. He fairly quailed under it. He had been in South America for years and knew 'ley fuga'; it was a dash for life by the victim while the firing squad shot him down. Rarely had the victim escaped.

"It shall be as you say," Heinrich hurriedly answered. "There is no chance for you to escape, Herr Spy. Four men of these eight can hit a man's hand at 200 yards."

I smiled grimly and thought to myself: "Probably, but not with much mescal hidden somewhere inside him."

It was novel and so desperate that I could not help but shudder, as I walked ahead of that squad of singers.

They soon came to my place of execution. It was on a high knoll and I was to be given a dash down the valley. To this I strongly objected until Heinrich, as gravely as a judge, accommodatingly let me look over the ground. A deep wash, which led off down the valley in a perfect maze of short coulees and shallow arroyos, made it just the thing I needed—if I lasted to reach it. I assented and Heinrich led me back to the firing squad. It was almost dark, and I knew the shadows would fall quickly, if I could but quibble with the drunken leader of the squad a moment or so more. Accordingly, I entered into a discussion of "ley fuga" and its technique. I protested that the victim should be given fifty yards, and be allowed to start himself on his desperate dash. Heinrich said that forty yards, with a command to run, was correct. It was, but he was drunk and so was the squad. They agreed, as gravely as owls, with me. I slowly paced off my yards, as they stood on the knoll and made ready, laughing at me.

It was a desperate chance. Only the shadows, the twilight and ability to carry lead was with me. "If one of those brutes don't wing me in the leg maybe I can keep going," I thought as I stumbled on.

By pure daring I stretched my fifty yards to sixty and then I gathered every muscle in my body and flung myself into a twisting, crouching run.

As I whirled this way and that, and the rifles above me cracked like a drum call, I thanked God for that mescal peddler. They were missing me!

A bullet swept off my hat, another ripped my sleeve from elbow to wrist, burning a hot sear down my forearm; a third flipped through the clothing at the pit of my arm. "God, but they're getting close!" I muttered, and then a sharp arroyo yawned beneath me and I plunged into it. A hail of bullets whistled harmlessly over the spot where I had leaped. I was free!

I heard ribald shouts and the thud of running feet as I crept down the arroyo in a swift, crouching run. "Couldn't play 'ley fuga' square, of course," I muttered to myself. "But I've got them beaten!" Suddenly, above the desire to live, came the full meaning of it. I had another chance to save her, to beat Valdez, to beat Hansen! Above me and behind me I heard maudlin shouts and curses in German, with Heinrich, frightened into partial soberness, urging them on. But they, poor fools, knew nothing of jungle-craft, and my escape was easy. Darkness closed in. The shouts behind me died.

The first pink of dawn was lighting the sky over the higher cliffs of the Saledo when I crept on my belly toward the tiny gleaming fire near the spring. I felt fairly certain that it was Manuel's fire, but I had to be sure. One mistake is all that nature allows to a fugitive in those mountains, where every man's hand is against the bandit and robber.

The little camp seemed deserted as I drew nearer, and I became more convinced that it belonged to Manuel. He had ridden the horses, evidently, where the casual thief would not find them. Like all Indians, he was sleeping like a cat, somewhere in the shadows near that fire.

"The dawn comes, my master," said a quiet voice almost at my elbow.

It was Manuel. He had stalked me from the moment I had made myself visible to his keen eyes on a high rock

"A Hail of Bullets Whistled Harmlessly Over the Spot Where I Had Leaped. I Was Free!"

which looked directly down on his camp. I was thankful that it was not some other crafty son of the mountain who had seen me. Then I grasped Manuel by the hand.

"Thou are truly a man who keeps his word, Manuel," I cried. "My time is short. Tell me, have you heard firing toward the rising sun?"

"None, master," he answered, with certainty.

"I may be able to save her," I muttered to myself, as Manuel saddled the horses. I was munching cold bread and meat with the relish of a starved man and a drink from the spring helped me back to my full strength. Then I hastily bathed the bullet burn on my right arm, and also my face and eyes. Manuel came, and without a word, we swung into the saddle and out onto the trail. Then I told Manuel what was up.

"They undoubtedly intend to fight a battle of a fake sort with Valdez," I said. "We must reach the Princess before this starts and rush our troops out of the trap." Manuel nodded and increased the pace.

Yet we were scarcely out of the glen where we were camped when the faint crack of rifles, which soon grew to a steady, if faint, crackle which was borne on the wind.

Manuel looked at me grimly and I nodded. The battle had begun, and we were fully ten miles away from it. Judging by the sounds, it was being fought in a little valley twenty miles from Durango and Hansen had arranged some fake trap which Valdez had knowingly sprung at dawn.

"As fast as we dare ride, Manuel!" I shouted, and he spurred ahead, crashing along a mountain trail as if it were a race course. I followed on Black Sam, and never did the big black perform more nobly.

We had barely reached the main trail leading over the crest of the Saledo's ridge and down toward the valley where we would strike the battle, when a new and purring note crept into the fighting. It was the snarl of the German machine guns, turned against those poor Indians!

"We have lost the race, Manuel!" I said. "They cannot stand that fire. But perhaps they will save the Princess."

Again he nodded, but I saw from his attitude that he had little hope. Yet we rode on like madmen, the horses often going almost to their knees as they stumbled over the rocky trail. The fighting was almost at its height, if we could tell by the firing. The patter of the machine guns came down the wind clearly now, and I knew we were a few miles from the battle. And we were dropping down toward it, onto the valley's shelf.

Then the hissing crack of the rifle fire grew lighter, altho the machine guns barked on in a steady tone.

"The Indians are fleeing," I thought to myself. Then the machine gun firing grew lighter and then ceased altogether. The whole fight had not lasted more than a half hour. Hansen's treachery had won!

I rode on with but a single hope. My Princess may have escaped. All thoughts in my mind hung on this hope, altho it was slender. I knew Valdez had planned a special guard to capture her. He was fighting for her and the dream of a German-made throne. I swore bitterly and spurred on. There was little I would not have given of my life then to have had Hansen and Valdez in my power.

"We near the road itself, master," called Manuel as he halted his horse. "Any movement on it can be seen from the rocks there," and he pointed beyond us to a great clutter of rocks.

"Can the traveler see horses tied at this point?" I asked him, and he nodded a negative. So we quickly tied them there, unslung our rifles and ran for the rocks. Once there we crept thru them carefully until, with almost a sheer drop one hundred and fifty yards below, the road stretched out for a short way in plain view of our eyes. It was all we could hope for. If the victors came that way we could see whether the Princess had escaped.

For fifteen minutes perhaps we lay there quietly, watching the road, when we heard the patter of hoofs. A body of horsemen went by at an easy gallop. "The advance guard," I thought, and was right. Other groups straggled by, all horsemen, and all of Valdez's command. Behind them, riding a bit slower, rode Hansen's choice cut-throats, their machine guns packed on horses. Then, surrounded by twenty or thirty men as guard, came Hansen and Valdez, talking and smiling, while between them, with drooping head, rode the "Rose of the Desert!"

She was a prisoner! All hope seemed gone, then, but I quickly made up my mind. They would know that I had struck one blow for the woman I loved and had sworn to defend.

"Look below at that last group, Manuel, and tell me truly if I dare risk a shot at one of the men who ride with the Princess?" I whispered in Manuel's ear. "Could I risk two shots, or must one be enough?"

He looked but an instant and whispered back. "But one, master, even tho you shoot better than most men. They will whirl when you fire and a second might strike her."

I knew he was right, but I longed for two shots. I had to choose, then, between the death of Hansen and Valdez.

"Hansen is the most dangerous man of the two," I thought. "May God who protects innocent women speed this bullet."

Then I stretched myself flat over the rocks, and the rifle barrel in my hand thrust out not unlike a snake striking. I covered Hansen's lithe body and signaled Manuel to watch closely, as he often did when I fired at big game.

Then the rifle spat out its deadly message to the traitor!

Without a cry he sank forward on the shoulders of his horse and then toppled to the ground. There was a mad cry raised by the guard as they eagerly but vainly scanned the rocks where we lay, for the rifle shot had sounded faintly. They clogged the way about the fallen man.

Jose Valdez cheated fate by leaping from his saddle and hiding himself behind the horse and the Princess. As Hansen fell she raised her eyes as if God had stricken him. In the simple movement I knew she had gained hope—perhaps had guessed who fired the bullet.

"A heart shot, master," whispered Manuel. "He fell stone dead from the horse."

With anxious eyes I waited for a chance at Valdez. With him dead it was possible that the band would scatter. But the man was wily. He hung behind his horse, and when, with Hansen supported between two soldiers, they started on a rapid gallop, he kept the girl between him and the rocks where the fatal shot came from. He was shouting orders to the troopers ahead and signaling for them to start an ascent farther down the road, in order to cut off any chance for our escape. We were too quick for him. Before they had comprehended his command, we were astride our horses and—out of sight of the men below—were scampering away along the way we came. Over those bare rocks we left no trail or marks by which even a Yaqui could have followed.

Like this we rode away to the hidden glen and the little spring. There, safe from pursuit, Manuel built a tiny fire and cooked a few strips of dried beef. We ate the warm food in silence, and then Manuel stood before me with folded arms, awaiting orders.

I had been in deep thought since I left the road, with its little drama. Relying on Manuel's judgment, I could consider Hansen out of the way. But there was still my arch-enemy, Jose Valdez, to reckon with. And he held as hostage the Princess, the woman I loved. Her look of despair, as she sat on her horse on the road below me, had touched that spark which lies in every man—a spark, which fired, makes him a danger to those who stand in his way.

"Manuel, have you the paper I gave you when we parted?" I asked him. He reached in his bosom and handed it to me.

I looked it over and re-read it, turning over its full value in my mind. Then suddenly I stood up, my mind full made.

"Manuel, I will sleep until the third hour of the setting sun," I said. "At that time awake me. This night we ride into Durango.'"

Even the Indian eyes of Manuel widened at the words as I laid down on my saddle and blanket and slept.

Valdez, having made the Princess a prisoner in his great jail at Durango, Burke, single handed, faces the greatest task of his life. He goes into the prison presenting himself as a trusted messenger from Valdez, and gets the Princess. Just as they are about to escape thru the great gate out of the city they are discovered and take refuge in the old Aztec Temple. From this point the story becomes a series of exciting thrills. Read the next and final instillment.

Man's Housekeeping.

"THERE, now," said the newspaper man's wife, "this room is to be your den, to do as you please with it. I shall not clean it up any time. You may throw your papers around on the floor until you are sick of the looks of it. Then you may clean it up yourself, if it ever becomes so bad it offends your sense of decency."

The plan was a great success. No room in the house is nearer immaculateness than the den. It is kept so by the newspaper man himself, who does his reading and writing and paper throwing exclusively in the dining-room.

Small Boy's Explanation.

STRANGER (at the front gate)—"Do you think your mother could let me have some eggs?"

Small boy—"No, ma'am. Our chickens have all gone dry."

Two Were Out, the Bases Filled, the Score Tied---Up Came

The Pinch Hitter

By Irving Estes

The Pinch Hitter Strode to the Plate, Fierce Resolve Depicted Upon His Noble Countenance.

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THE Soldier team at Vancouver Barracks was as sore as a dyspeptic cougar with the rheumatics in his rear axle; the great throng of rooters—officers and privates—who thru the long, nerve-tingling game had yipped loud and faithfully for them now headed silently homeward, wearing their chins at half-mast. Was there reason for such lugubrious gobs of gloom? I'll say there was. Listen; here was the situation:

The Dough Boys in this, their first clash with the speedy Portland Knights of Columbus aggregation of sweet-playing harps, had just been beaten to a fragmentary frazzle, even tho they had started a rally which, for a time, looked like it would breeze them along under the wire winners in a Garrison finish. They had come to bat in the last half of the ninth with the visitors leading. The first two Dough Boys up got on safely; the third hit a sizzling homer over the center-fielder's head. With these three runs the game would have been over, with Vancouver at the happy end of it; and the harps gave up hope. Then—trouble came. A bugle call rang out. It was 6 o'clock. The colors were being lowered. To a soldier that means something; and they didn't intend that a little thing like a ball game should detract them from other business at hand. Those three sodier runners stopped short in their tracks! Right there between bases they came to "attention;" the ball was shot back to the infield, and those rigid "runners" were tagged out; the ol' game swung over to the surprised and jubilant Knights. Tough luck. Had the Dough Boys any call to be sore? I'll say they had.

The manager of the Soldier team—Sergeant Wallington—let out a yell like a Siwash Indian lit up on Old Doctor Slocum's Pain Killer. He went on to say, with gestures, that the Dough Boys had been bilked good and proper—that they had the Knights beaten to a frothy custard up to the time that sudden and unavoidable break sent the ol' game cuckoo, robbing Vancouver of victory, and all that line—you know—of pale pink alibi stuff!

Hennessey, captain of the K. C. gang, listened to him rave, an expression of calm and haughty disdain upon his classic features; then, in that gentle, Chesterfieldian way of his, he said: "Say, you big Bolshevik Swede agitator, what's eatin' you, huh! What do you expect when you go against a reg-lar team, like us! Man, you're in big luck to have your uniforms left——"

"Aw, cut that line of poison-gas chatter, Hennessey," broke in the manager of the Barracks team, —"where do you get that way! You might get by with that over in Albina, but——"

"What do you want?" Hennessey asked suddenly.

"A return game."

"Fair enough. When?"

"Well, say on the fourth of August."

Hennessey turned to his players. "Ahoy, gang," he said, "how about taking on this wobbly bunch of rookies again on the fourth of August?" They talked it over among them, then the K. C. captain came back to Sergeant Wallington.

"Well, Sturgeon," he remarked, cheerily, "it's all right."

"You'll give us a return game?"

"You bet."

"Where?"

"At the Vaughn street ball park."

"Fine and dandy! And the gate receipts——"

"Will go to the Red Cross; with a winners' purse, say—of about two hundred dollars—which will go to us——"

"Mebbe; personally, I think you haven't a show to cop that side bet."

Hennessey grinned. "Over there at Vaughn street, Sturgeon—before our own crowd, we'll make your little E-flat team look like a bunch of bushers with the pip——"

"And we Dough Boys," cut in Sergeant Wallington, fervidly, "will flatten out you rough-neck rummies so you'll think a flock of armored tanks have been ricocheting off your systems——"

"Money talks!"

"It sure does," responded the Sergeant, good-naturedly, "and on next Thursday that two hundred will say to you—'good-by!'"

In the utmost good feeling then, the teams parted to await the time of further reckoning upon the afternoon of the great return date.

While interest in the coming game promised to be intense, it was thought by the management that it could be stimulated to a still greater degree if each team strengthened for the big contest; so, each manager was permitted to secure one player—and one only—said additional player to come from any league or team where it was possible to secure him.

To aid his Dough Boys, Sergeant Wallington arranged with the manager of the San Francisco Seals to send to Portland for the big game a pitcher named Gilhooly, who had been showing a lot of stuff since coming out to the Coast. The Sergeant—and the entire military and civic population of Vancouver—had it doped out that with ol' dependable Gilhooley shooting in hand-grenades from the firing-line it would be easy pickings.

Manager Cassady of the Knights of Columbus team hardly knew what player to send for; he talked it over with Captain Hennessey. The Knights were going good; the team played together like clockwork; they had perfected some good inside play; it seemed foolish to break up the smooth-running machine simply to add a new face in the line-up to help swell gate receipts. "To tell you the truth," said Hennessey to Cassady, "I've as much use for another player as an auto has for a whip socket!" Finally, after much discussion, the following telegram was sent to McCredie, manager of the Salt Lake Bees:

"Friend Mac:

"Big game here on Aug. 4; must strengthen. If you have a pinch hitter on hand who can deliver the goods send him on; expense no object.

CASSADY,
Manager K. of C.'s."

In due time a message came back from Boss McCredie:

"Cassady:

"Am sending you Red Dan Dougan; he batted over .400 all season; he ought to be about what the doctor ordered. Dougan will cost you $50 for the one game.

"M'CREDIE."

Red Dan Dougan!

Every fan in Portland knew about Red Dan—how he had been busting the fences; with that big walloper sitting on the bench, ready to come to bat in a pinch, it certainly looked like easy money for the Knights. Hennessey's men heard the glad tidings—and began placing their bets. Over in Vancouver, too, the word spread that Dougan was coming; still, he caused no consternation nor shifting of the betting odds; for they had the great and only—Gilhooly! And they figured that human string bean would stand the hard-hitting Knights upon their respective heads.

His Umps Listened With Pleased Attention.

The morning of the 4th dawned clear and bright. At an early hour a big crowd numbering 3,000 souls—and two real estate men—began trekking over the Inter-State bridge, all eager and excited over the prospect of witnessing a sizzling game—and grabbing off some Portland money as well. Pitcher Gilhooly was on hand with bells; the Vancouver crowd paraded him up and down Broadway and Washington streets, with a long military and civic escort of rooters, thereby hoping to throw a scare into the friends and supporters of the home team.

Shortly before noon Cassady anxiously sought out his captain.

"Hennessey," he asked, "has Red Dan Dougan arrived from Salt Lake?"

"He has that," responded Hennessey. "I met him at the train."

"Does he look good?"

"Well, so-so."

"I mean," went on Cassady, anxiously, "does he look like a ball player?"

Hennessey's manner was like one who wanted to give as favorable a report as possible without committing perjury.

"Does he look like a ball player?" he repeated. "Well, he might—when he gets them funny clothes off! He's big enough; and he's red headed enough! He's got a head like a cocoanut—only with not so much expression; and a pair of feet like torpedo destroyers——"

"Yes—yes."

"But he's a sort of glum gazago, and hasn't much to say——"

"That's all right; Red Dan lets his bat do his talking for him."

"And when I was taking him around, introducing him to the sports as Dougan, the heavy-hitting demon from the majors—well, he jes' sort of hung back, grinnin' like a sick cat——"

"We may not need him at all," spoke up Cassady. "He'll adorn the bench till he's needed to clean up; then—I expect some action for my fifty bucks!"

At 2 o'clock sharp the game began.

A big crowd was out; from the racket that started with the magic words—"Play ball!"—it was evident that every fan and rooter had brought a six-cylinder pair of lungs along. Grim, stern-faced officers sat in the boxes; khaki-clad soldiers, accompanied by fair dames, awaited with eager anticipation the play out there upon the diamond, exchanging from time to time airy persiflage and verbal confetti with the hosts gathered to yip uproariously for the ol' home team—the peppery Knights of Columbus.

The fight was on—fierce, unrelenting, hotter'n a Mexican bill of fare in August! For six innings neither side got a runner further than second; every attempted spurt was nipped shorter than the bathing suits at Columbia Beach. There was some hitting, understand; but each side presented a stone wall defense. Then, in the last of the seventh, with two down and a runner on third, the Knights attempted to slip a run across on a wobbly, hesitating roller down toward first. Lafferty, the runner, broke for the plate. The pitcher fielded the ball; it reached the catcher along with a cloud of dust—and Lafferty sliding in home on his Adam's apple.

The umpire had been standing back of the pitcher's box; he came tearing in to see the play. He jerked a rigid thumb up over his shoulder; and he yipped out hoarsely: "Yer out!"

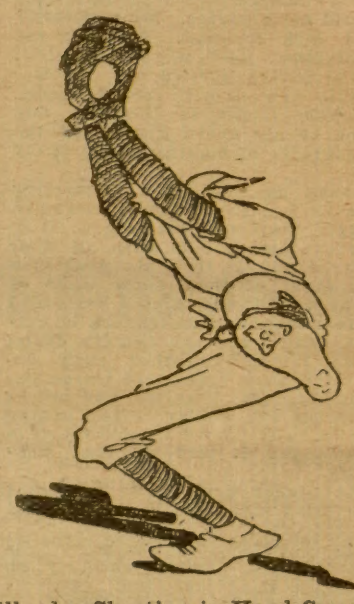
The riot started.

It was a close play, no doubt of that. Anybody could have one guess on it—according to the way he had bet. The home crowd yelped in rage and fury; the Knights gathered around the stern visaged arbitrator, and they said things which blistered the paint off the flagpole in center field!

His Umps listened with pleased attention to their remarks. Then, in a gentle way like a sea-lion he barked: "Now—git back to work—or I'll be sendin' about six of yez to the showers!"

That play seemed to put a lot of the ol' pep into the doughty Dough Boys from Vancouver Barracks. They charged out "over the top"—they advanced by squads, by brigades and battalions; they

Lafferty Slid Home on His Adam's Apple.



Gilhooley Shooting in Hand Grenades.

They Started a Batting Rally.

laid down a barrage of base-hits—and they charged over the ramparts of the home guard the same way they're going to slip the ol' raspberry to Bill the All-highest a little later in the season. When that fatal half of the eighth was over the score stood 3—0 in favor of Sergeant Wallington's fierce fighting warriors.

So far, Gilhooly had held the Knights to three scattered hits; he seemed to have everything; the Harps were helpless, it seemed; he had 'em eating out of his mitt. Then, in the last of the eighth they broke loose!

Led by big Hennessey, they started a batting rally; and they began running that soldier outfield ragged. Man, that was some slugfest and batting soiree. Everything Gilhooly tried to hand 'em they simply ate up! They chased three runs across and with two out, they filled the bases!

The score was tied; a good wallop now would doubtless mean victory!

The home crowd began yelling lustily: "Dougan!" "Put in Red Dan Dougan!" "Win yer game right here, boy!"

Cassady heard 'em yipping; but his mind was already made up. Here, if ever, was the place for his mighty pinch hitter. Dougan, bat in hand, had been nervously squirming about on the bench, like a war-horse scenting the battle from afar. Cassady signaled to him. The pinch hitter strode to the plate, fierce resolve depicted upon his noble countenance.

He pulled his cap down fiercely over one eye; he spat at the plate; and he bawled out raucously to Gilhooly: "Shoot 'er in, kid! I'm goin' to hit that ol' pill so hard—they'll be pullin' it up out of the Pacific Ocean for a depth bomb!"

Remember, there were two down.

The next batter up after Dougan was a weak sister with the bat, knowing which Sergeant Wallington determined to take a desperate chance. Rather than let Red Dan maul the ball, he thought best to walk him, even tho it forced in a run! That, bad as it was, would be better than a probable cluster of runs pattering across the pan.

Bleachers and grandstand were now in a wild, seething cry: "Red Dougan!" "Oh, you Danny boy—hop on one, son—ride 'er out a mile!" "Here goes yer ol' ball game!"

Truly, it was a tragic moment. The Sergeant talked it over with Pitcher Gilhooly. The slab artist balked at the idea of passing Red Dougan; he wanted to pitch to him, trusting that he might hit into a play at one of the bases, or send up a fly. Sergeant Wallington, sizing up the formidable figure at the plate, reached a definite decision.

"You walk that big walloper!" he said in tones of finality.

Gilhooly, obeying orders, lobbed over four wide ones.

Big Red Dougan jogged joyously on down to first; a runner was forced in from third. The next batter up, as Wallington had anticipated, proved an easy out; but now the score stood 4—3 against the Soldiers.

Well, a one run lead isn't much sometimes; in this fracas it was good as a million! The Dough Boys came in determined to sew up the ol' game; they fought—beneath their eyes of their officers and fellow soldiers—a grand fight. They had the bases full, and the home crowd gasping for breath—but they couldn't break thru. The Knights of Columbus, cheered and encouraged by leather-lunged support from grandstand and bleachers, fought the Dough Boys off, retiring the side without a run.

The base on balls given to the pinch hitter—Red Dan Dougan—forcing in a run—had won the game for the Knights, and brought defeat to the soldiers from Vancouver.

Shortly after the showers in the clubhouse, Manager Cassady—chipper as a cricket—was talking with his equally jubilant men, the topic being the division of a certain $200 winners' stake. A messenger boy arrived upon the scene; he handed Cassady a yellow envelope. Cassady tore it open hurriedly; then, glancing at the head, he said fiercely: "See here, kid, this message was filed in Salt Lake last night; what's all the delay?"

The boy grinned, quite unabashed.

"Must have got side tracked in the office," he volunteered. "I got it about 2 o'clock; when I hiked over here with it the game was started; an'—an' I——"

"I'll sue the company for this!" stormed Cassady; then he started reading the message:

"Cassady:

Red Dan Dougan drafted; cannot report to you. Am sending another redhead named Flarety. He is a pitcher and should win his game. Don't count on him to hit. He couldn't hit a feather mattress with a bed slat. His batting average is .114—and he's in an awful slump right now. M'CREDIE."

So—this was the .114 slugger (in a slump) who had forced in the winning run!

A smile began playing around Cassady's lips; he tossed the message over to Hennessey, who read it aloud to the others clustered around. When the laugh was over, Hennessey turned to the manager and questioned:

"How about it, Cassady? Going to sue the company?"

Cassady's grin broadened.

"Naw, I think I'll let 'em off this time. Mistakes will happen"—then, starting out to look up Flarety, he added: "Mistakes will happen; I think the 'Sturgeon' made one himself—when he walked a .114 'slugger'—with the bases full!"

Why Mabel Went Home

By Will H. Greenfield

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DUSK was filling the village streets with violet light and Crompton, hungry and footsore, resolved to take a chance. Leaving the road, he made for the first house in sight and impudently banged on the kitchen door.

It started to open slowly, but he slammed it wide and walked in, the handle of a revolver cuddled in his palm.

"Something to eat d—n quick!" he demanded in cold, brittle tones. "Get busy with the grub if you want to keep your health."

The door closed softly and there stood revealed to his shamed gaze a frail little old lady with beautiful white hair parted in the middle of her ivory forehead, and big, soft, shrinking eyes. He gasped, and the blood was sucked from his face.

"I thought you were a man," he faltered lamely. "I've got a train to catch out of Milton, and I'm in an awful big hurry. Did—did I frighten you?"

"Oh, no; I'm not easily scared, my son." Her voice was very low, but steady. "Nobody could wish to harm an old lady like me, and I dearly love to cook. Do you like eggs?"

Crompton slipped the revolver into his hip pocket and laughed. "Just the thing!" he cried. "Fry me about six, mother, and I'll be on my way. I'd pay you now if I were able, but to tell you the truth I'm penniless. Of course you recognized me at once, didn't you, mother?"

"I can't say that I did, my son," was the quiet rejoinder. "However, I can make a pretty good guess now."

"No doubt!" shrugged Crompton, his lips curving in a queer smile. "It is needless to name names, but you must know that at this moment I'm about as popular as the smallpox. To the world at large I must appear a figure of sinister and horrific mien. It is the world against me, mother, so I am fighting in a purely Celtic fashion, hitting every head in the hope of hitting the 'right one!'"

The old lady was cracking eggs into a white china bowl and a butter-flecked skillet sizzled atop the kitchen stove. "You seem to be a born outlaw," she said severely. "If I hadn't known your mother, Jack Crompton, I could almost wish the officers would get you and take you to the county jail. I can't understand why people are so afraid of you. I don't think you ever did anything like murder—in fact, I know you haven't. And I hope you never get so low as to steal an innocent girl away from her home and motner!"

"I'm a robber, mother, not a child stealer!"

"Ah, but my child has been stolen, taken from me by a villain of the deepest dye!" She wiped the tears from her eyes with a corner of her white apron and set a place for him at the table. "If you lived an ordinary life," she continued sadly, "you would know that my daughter eloped yesterday with Max Lugar."

"And who is he, mother? You may turn the eggs, please."

"He is a villain who came here to spend the holidays and so fascinated my Mabel that she has run away with him. My daughter was all I had, my son, and the blow has hurt me."

"Doubtless; but if he is an honorable man others will not say that this Max Lugar has committed a dreadful offense by winning your daughter's favor!"

"An honorable man!" She rolled the word on her tongue with elaborate scorn. "Does an honorable man pay clandestine court to a poor country girl and spirit her away from home? An honorable man! Does an honorable man use his polish and education to hoodwink a foolish maid?"

A Revolver Cracked, a Woman Screamed and a Heavy Body Crashed to the Floor.

"It's a funny article, this honor!" laughed Crompton. "I'm a crook and a jail breaker, but I wouldn't be guilty of betraying an innocent girl. I'm hunted up hill and down dale; starved, stoned and shot at—and what for? For taking from the rich what they have taken from the poor in ways that are within the law. But a Max Lugar can slay a soul and go scot free! Let's not talk of honor, mother; they have an honor system in the institution I just left."

Crompton opened the door and peered out, then took a seat at the table and ate of the frugal meal the old lady prepared for him. He finished the hurried repast in silence, but when he rose to leave he suddenly stooped and kissed her on the cheek.

"Mother," he said hoarsely, "I had a sister who fell a victim to a man like this Lugar. To give her the medical care she needed when the wretch abandoned her I committed my first theft, and when she died I continued—bent on my downward career. If I make the big cities and ever run across your daughter I'll send her home to you. Good-by!"

"Her name's Mabel Shelly!" the old lady called after him. "God grant that you may send her back to me!"

An hour later, as he lay hidden in the freight yards at Milton, Crompton saw his train getting ready to pull out. Hesitating only long enough to make sure that he had made no mistake he swung himself under a freight car and took up a position on a brakebeam.

It was a thrilling, grimy trip to the city, but he did not mind it so long as he eluded the police. A surreptitious visit to the home of an old friend who had abandoned the devious path of crime for the straight and narrow way resulted in a bath, new clothes, cane, top hat and diamond ring. Looking every inch the solid citizen he meant to personate and fingering the snug bank roll that reposed in his pocket, he was strolling thru the business section when he saw coming toward him two city detectives who knew him from unenviable experience. Before they had a chance to spot him he dodged into the lobby of a hotel he was passing and dropped into an armchair. In a minute he was snoring loudly and congratulating himself upon his lucky escape. On the point of shaking off his counterfeit slumber a heavy hand upon his shoulder sent a thrill of apprehension thru him.

"Beg pardon, sir," said a courteous voice in his ear, "but I'm the house detective. Hadn't you better go to your room, sir?"

"Thanks," drawled Crompton; "I must have fallen asleep. Here—get yourself a good smoke." He peeled a bill off his roll and handed it to the detective, who pocketed it, saying: "If you'll give me your room number, sir, I'll get you fixed up."

The puzzled Crompton now caught a whiff of the alcoholic fumes that scented his breath, recalled the farewell drinks he had imbibed upon leaving his friend, and no longer wondered at the detective's solicitude.

"Room 233," he ventured at random, and fought down an almost irresistible desire to snicker when the house sleuth, still in an accommodating mood, got the key to the room and escorted him to its entrance.

"Here you are, sir," said he, unlocking the door. "Hope you won't think me onicious, but you were wearing some valuables which might have got away from you down there in the lobby. My name is Halsey. Ask for me if I can do anything further for you, and lock your room door."

Crompton sat down upon the bed and gave vent to a long spasm of silent chuckles. "What funny things will happen when you wander thru the town," he mused. "Halsey, like some of the headquarters dubs, don't seem to be able to recognize bear meat after it has been dressed."

Grinning expansively at his own pun he started to remove his coat when his movements were arrested by voices in the adjoining room. A man and a woman were speaking, and with vigor, too.

"There must be an end of this d—n nonsense," said a man's voice, sharp, cold, metallic. "You've got to remain here with me tonight if I have to dope you and tie you up. I let you off last night, but you must be reasonable now. You've got the name and you might as well have the game."

"And I left my mother for a beast like you!" said a woman's voice, full of scorn and loathing. "How blind I was to ever dream of matrimony with you. You never meant to marry me—never thought of me except as another victim added to your long list. Thank God, it is not too late for me to go home to mother!"

"It is too late! D—n you, come here!"

"Max, don't touch me! Don't, I say—don't—or I'll fire!"

A man's mocking laugh rang out as Crompton burst in the door of the room, a revolver cracked, a woman screamed.

and a heavy body crashed to the floor. Two bodies were stretched on the carpet as Crompton gazed about him—one was the dead body of Max Lugar, and the other the swooning figure of Mabel Shelly, who, raised in the escaped convicts arms, murmured hysterically: "Did I fire—did I kill him?"

"No, indeed," smiled Crompton. "I shot him—you missed by a mile!"

"Thank God!" murmured Mabel Shelly, and fainted dead away.

"The most cold-blooded thing I ever saw," said Detective Halsey in relating the story afterwards. "Crompton emptied three revolvers into Lugar—his own, the girl's and Lugar's. He fired the last shot as I grabbed him. 'He sent my sister in dishonor to her grave, Halsey,' he said to me. 'I broke in to rescue Miss Shelly and saw the scoundrel I had been seeking for years!' He had come to us with murder in his heart and I picked him up for a drunken guest!"

* * *

As Handsome Does.

"AFTER all," remarked the harness man, "the old saws are true. Every day you will discover that they are being proved all around us, if you will only keep your eyes open."

"And if you see things with your eyes open that are not there at all, I s'pose that's nothing more or less than a little something the matter with things and no trouble with the eyes," said the rude person. "The old saws are all toothless. They cut no ice at all. They are not true. I know they are not, because I've had occasion in my long and varied life to try several of them out.

"When I was a young person and placed my feet regularly under the table of my parents they used to spring saws on me. One of their pets was 'Handsome is as handsome does.' They would drag that out and make it perform as frequently as possible. If I happened to be good and well-behaved and washed my face and combed my hair and expected a few well chosen words of admiring approbation, they wrecked the castle of my dreams with the calm assertion that 'Handsome is as handsome does.' If I was naughty in the presence of company and if the company, striving to be polite, managed to suggest gently that well, anyway, he's a nice-looking little fellow, my parents would say again, 'Yes, but after all, handsome is as handsome does.' I always knew that the phrase did not express what my parent really felt and that the worst was yet to come after the company had gone.

"Eventually I became curious about the accuracy of that phrase. I developed a desire to know just how handsome did. So I cast about for a handsome person to watch. I discovered that folks in general called my best friend handsome. I had never suspected it of him, but I came in time to see that it was so. So I watched him. And as from day to day I followed him around until he threatened to tin can my dog if I didn't stay away from him once in a while, I found to my sorrow and amazement that the problem was still unsolved. For he did so little that I could base no conclusions at all upon the insufficient evidence.

"As I grew older my desire to know grew stronger. It came to be a veritable passion with me. And since, as my chum grew older he grew handsomer and handsomer, I still considered him my best chance to solve the riddle. So I stuck to him and watched him. I observed him thruout adolescence and on into young manhood. And tho he has been doing less and less I still had hope. For I reasoned that sooner or later he would be compelled to take his place in the world of men and do something. And then I would see. Then I would observe his doings and tabulate and arrange them, and perhaps make a book explaining the meaning of the words, 'Handsome is as handsome does' for generations yet to come. And thus my name would become a household word."

"Well, your name didn't become a household word except among those who live near to you," the harness man answered. "What happened?"

"It wasn't what happened," the rude person went on. "It was what didn't happen. Handsome, in the person of my friend, went out into the great world, married money and thereafter did nothing at all."

* * *

War the Leveler.

A BATTLE CREEK lady danced three times with a good looking first lieutenant and then said:

"Pardon me, sir, but your face is strangely familiar. Haven't I seen you somewhere before?"

"Yes, madam, you have," responded the officer, "I was your milkman for more than three years."

* * *

Old Acquaintances.

"MIND that step," said the very young policeman to the very old offender as he reached the police station entrance with his cargo.

"Garn," growled the hardened old jailbird; "I knew that there step afore you was born."

The Contest on Overlook

By William Gerard Chapman

[Copyright, 1918, by W. D. Boyce Co.]

A MOMENT after the train came to a stop at Greenville, the youthful appearing passenger in the day coach rose from his seat and walked carelessly down the aisle toward the door. A red-faced man seated further back in the car glanced up, frowned, and brought himself together in a quick movement that poised him on the edge of the seat like a plump bird about to launch itself from a limb. The young man stopped at the water cooler and in a leisurely manner helped himself to a cup of the tepid contents—whereupon the florid visaged one grunted relievedly and relaxed, tho still keeping an unobtrusive eye on the other.

The engine whistled; the train quivered, jerked and started; and the stout person sagged deeper into the red plush and sighingly brought his respiration back to its normal. Then suddenly he leaped to his feet, his lips forming a suppressed oath, and bounded down the aisle. The young man had abruptly dropped the tin cup from which he had been reluctantly sipping, jumped thru the door, side-stepped the startled conductor who was just entering, and swung off the steps to the cinders. Only a spry youth could negotiate the leap, and besides, the clumsier man had been blocked by the conductor, and when he gained the platform the speed of the train made alighting impossible.

"Blast the whelp!" he exploded. "Hey, conductor, stop the train—stop it, I say! Give you ten dollars if you'll stop her!"

The conductor, still puzzled beyond speech, looked covetously at the greenback, then spat philosophically over the steps and recovered his tongue sufficiently to say, "Cain't do it, sir; cain't do it noways," and passed on into the car to remove himself from temptation. The stout man, his face now a still ruddier crimson that verged alarmingly on apoplexy, spoke unkind words to himself for his foolish impulse and returned to his seat, to speculate on the sudden move of the youthful passenger.

Perhap's the lad's action was entirely natural; he might suddenly have decided that he wanted to get off there—or he had not heard the station called and saw the name-board just as the train pulled out. He couldn't possibly have known he was being followed, and therefore wasn't trying to evade any one. Anyway, it would have been an unwise move to follow him from the train in that fashion; it would have given the game away with nothing to be gained. He mentally blessed the conductor for refusing his request.

Lane Parker, when the momentum of his flying leap had exhausted itself, dug his heels into the sloping cinder bank, and turning at right angles to the track, struck off into the hills without even a backward glance at the train. At no time during the hour's ride from Chattanooga had he evinced by look or manner the slightest interest in the stout passenger. A veiled scrutiny of the car's occupants when he boarded the train had satisfied him that this florid individual was the man against whom he had been warned; and his actions as Lane left the train, observed from the corner of an eye, had proven the identity. "Might as well fool him as far as I can; he won't be sure that I was onto him, and he'll try to think I just naturally decided to get off as I did, for purely personal reasons," Lane mused as he trudged over the hills. His objective was a cabin nestling in the hills not many miles from where he had left the train, and he believed he could reach it almost as quickly as tho he had gone on to Hicksville and thence by buckboard.

Lane "holed up" in the cabin of Jud Waring for nearly a week to throw his pursuer off the scent. He had visited there a few weeks earlier, after Jud, a former fellow townsman, had written him at his home in the Vermont hills of something peculiar that he had noticed in the soil on a slope of Overlook Mountain. Jud's Yankee curiosity had impelled him to send a specimen of the soil to Lane, who had dipped into chemistry at the Academy back home, and Lane had found it to contain bauxite, a disintegration of feldspar rich in alumina, from which commercial aluminum is derived. Large deposits of bauxite are scarce, and the Aluminum Products Corporation was always in the market for tracts containing them, as he had ascertained by careful inquiries of several manufacturers by letter.

All this sounded to Lane very much like the knock of Opportunity for which he had held a listening ear ever since Patty Witherspoon had entered into his scheme of life. The acres of his father were few and worn—he had toiled his share in wearing them out since he was knee high to a milking stool—and his thoughts for two years had centered on the purchase of an adjoining farm which was for sale. Possession of these acres and the modest house and farm buildings they surrounded would mean possession of Patty. Jared Witherspoon would not

"Well, Well," He Cried, "I'm Sure It's Lane Parker—Aren't You Lane Parker of Maple Town, Vermont?"

give his daughter to a landless, penniless youth—but Patty had been willing to wait. Lane was industrious and enterprising, but it was a discouraging task to get together even the modest sum needed for a first payment on the property, with the very limited business opportunities afforded by a farming community. He never could do it with the savings from farm wages, and he was alert for the chance to get at something more lucrative. And then the glittering prospect of locating a bauxite deposit had come out of a clear sky.

He drew his savings from the bank, after confiding to Patty the tale of golden promise, and with her buoyant encouragement singing pleasantly in his ears journeyed from his own Green Mountains to the richer hills of Tennessee. Directed by Jud Waring he had found the slopes containing the rich clay, and satisfied with the depth of the deposit by making borings, he sought the owners and secured options on several small tracts for a few dollars. Only on one side of the mountain did he find the precious clay. The land itself was barren and considered nearly worthless by the owners, and they were delighted with the opportunity to get rid of it at the very fair price Lane offered. He made a mental reservation to pay them a very fair bonus over the purchase price when the ultimate sale to the aluminum concern was completed. Thus he salved his New England conscience, which began to prick him slightly at the thought of buying these rich deposits at such ridiculously low figures.

One of the biggest tracts, and from indications the most valuable, was held by a farmer who was visiting his son in the western part of the State, and Lane learned that he was due to return in about two weeks. He would sell; his wife assured Lane of that. The price offered was well above what the land was valued at, and the farmer's wife was as anxious for her husband's return as Lane was. He must take his chances of meeting this man later, and perhaps it was just as well, as Lane had about exhausted his funds.

He returned home, his pockets heavy with clay but empty of cash, with his amazing tale of riches held in the common looking stuff he exhibited. Lane sold his horse and buggy and his yoke of yearling steers, borrowed all the money he could, and persuaded his father to mortgage the farm to complete the sum necessary to take up the options. Lane gave assurance of the immediate marketability of the land, and showed in substantiation the letters from his aluminum people of whom he had inquired. With the funds in his possession he returned to Tennessee. The morning after he arrived in Chattanooga there came a letter from his father. The missive read:

"Dear Son: There has been a man here just after you left Wednesday asking for you at the village. I think he means no good. He came down to the house and I told him you had just gone to Chattanooga and he looked took aback and then tried to pump me. I didn't tell him much. Said his name was Hammersmith, or some such. He went back to the village and took too much and talked about how he knew what you were up to and he would trail you and find out. Lemuel Peters came down to tell me about it. The man showed a letter you had written to some company asking about Bauxite. Look out for him. He is a squatty sort of man, fat, with a red face and bald. I am writing this in haste as I reckon he might turn up down there, as he left the next day and asked Sim Hankins at the depot about train connections for the South."

Lane pondered over this new and slightly disturbing factor in his plans. He had yet to secure the biggest tract, and the interloper, who doubtless had designs on Lane's discovery, might cause complications. He kept an eye out for a squatty sort of man while he remained for another day in the city to buy some new soil augers. Then the next day, on the train bound for the mountains, he had run squarely into him—or at least so it had seemed.

Jud Waring lived alone in a cabin of his own building in the highlands of Eastern Tennessee. A rover by inclination, he had left the hills where he had been born to "see the world," and after a year or so of mild adventure, found himself in the Great Smoky Mountains, where the lure of the wild and rugged knobs held him fast. Rifle and fish-hook brought him all that he needed to sup-

ply his wants, and he spent his time in prospecting for coal, which lay somewhere in the hills.

He was more curious than hopeful over the result of his enterprise in sending Lane a specimen of the peculiar earth formation he had noticed while on one of his prospecting tours, "I reckon it may be something as good as you say," he said to Lane as they sat before the cabin during the last of their evenings together, "but I can't noways sense its value. I've never heard tell of aluminum, but then you've had a sight more schooling than me, and I reckon you know. If it pans out big enough you can give me a quarter of what you make and we'll call it square."

They discussed the probability of Lane's follower stepping in and interfering with his plans for acquiring the principal bauxite tract should he discover the location of the deposits; and various means of throwing him off the trail were suggested. Far into the night they talked, with the result that Lane wrote out an order for delivery of the boring tools to Jud, who would go to Hickstown and get them the next day—when Lane also would leave for the purpose of taking up his options. These would expire in a few days, and when the deeds were safely filed, he still had to find the owner of the biggest tract and negotiate its purchase before the interloper discovered the location of the find. Lane felt that the fellow would endeavor to seek out his sphere of activity with the cunning of a fox; his quick jump to Tennessee and picking up Lane's trail at Chattanooga indicated pertinacity and craftiness, and Lane's intuition warned him that he had a dangerously capable opponent in the squatty man with the red face.

Lane took up his options, paying over the cash to each owner, and with the deeds in his pocket journeyed to Hickstown, the county seat, to file them; and not until they were safely in the hands of the recorder did he venture to show himself in the one hotel of the town.

As tho in fulfillment of a wish, a short, fat, red visaged man sat dozing in a chair in the fly-specked, dingy office of the hostelry. Lane saw him glance up, waken instantly, and then drop back into his sleepy state of boredom. Five minutes later, as the newly arrived guest turned on the stair-landing on his way to his room, he saw the occupant of the office chair rise, walk over to the register and scan it with seeming satisfaction.

Just after Lane had seated himself in the hotel dining-room that evening, the stout man entered and after a word with the negro at the door, was shown to a seat at the same table. As he sat down he looked intently at Lane, started with pleased surprise, and shot out his hand across the gray, spattered cloth.

"Well, well," he cried, "I'm sure it's Lane Parker—aren't you Lane Parker of Mapletown, Vermont? Of course you don't remember me—you were only a little shaver when I was there last. But your father and I knew each other well, years ago. Ever hear him speak of Godfrey Hammerton?"

"Yes, I think so," admitted Lane, eyeing him with a frank scrutiny. "Yes, I am quite sure I do remember him speaking of you. And I really believe I remember you myself, tho of course it was a long time ago and I mightn't have recognized you if you hadn't spoken." Lane's smile showed real pleasure at meeting an old friend of the family in such a lonely, out-of-the-way spot.

"This is certainly great luck, my meeting you down here in this neck o' the woods. Just ran down for a few days' turkey shooting. What brings you so far from home, Lane? I suppose I can call you that, my boy."

"Oh, been visiting a fellow I used to know back home; lives near here in a cabin in the timber. And prospecting around some. How's the shooting?"

"Fine. What say we go out together for turkey tomorrow? Good! We'll get an early start and put in the day."

The meal passed pleasantly for both men, and Hammerton's hospitality, that of an earlier arrival to the newer guest, would not brook the danger of Lane becoming lonely in a strange place. Until bedtime they talked of many things, the conversation frequently being led around by the older man to the possibilities of rich mineral deposits in the wild hills that surrounded them.

"I shouldn't wonder a bit," offered Lane, when the topic had been adroitly introduced for the sixth time. "Fact is, I may want to ask your advice about something."

"Be glad to give you the benefit of what I know about minerals, my boy, any time," interrupted his companion with a degree of eagerness. "What is it? Here, have a smoke. Now let's sit here comfortably and let the old man air his knowledge of—what did you say it was you wanted to know about?"

Lane rose and yawned sleepily. "Thank you. That's mighty good of you, but I'm tired to death tonight, and you must be too. I won't bother you with it now. Some other time. Guess I'll go to bed. Good night."

Hammerton concealed his disappointment bravely, but his good-natured laugh was a little forced. "Guess you are about all in. Well, another time then. See you tomorrow at six-thirty. Good night."

Lane went to his room well satisfied with the drift of affairs. He no longer feared Hammerton. To keep him occupied with his endeavors to extract the information he sought would be an easy task, and one not wholly unamusing to the Green Mountain boy. Then, until the return of the farmer who owned the big tract that Lane could not bear the thought of losing, he would guide Hammerton's pernicious activities so that they would bring down upon him his just deserts for the questionable methods he was employing to get hold of the bauxite deposits.

Lane had waited until now to read the letter from Patty that had awaited him at the Hickstown post office, and to this pleasant duty devoted himself before turning out the coal oil lamp. Then, with his mind cleared of scheming plans and filled with thoughts of a well-kept farm in the Vermont hills, with Patty singing about her tasks in a snug little white-painted house with green shutters, he sought his corn-husk mattress to dream of the day when this would come to pass.

The quest of wild tukeys the next day led the two sportsmen thru a bewildering variety of cover. Hammerton seemed willing that Lane should lead the way, only occasionally taking the initiative himself. The older man made several casual attempts to introduce the subject of mineral deposits, but none was successful. The younger and more enthusiastic sportsman at each allusion to the subject became vitally interested in the proximity of game, and a warning "S-sn!" brought silence and an interest well simulated even if perfunctory, in the possibility of flushing a gobbler. Between them they brought down three fine turkeys before the morning was over.

At noon they stepped out of a "slashing," dense with brush and second growth, onto an out-cropping of rock that overlooked a beautiful and rugged prospect.

As Lane glanced about he came to a sudden stop and turned to face his companion. "Let's find a better place for lunch; it's too windy here." He spoke hurriedly and started back into the timber. His manner betrayed to the older man an agitation that invested the spot with new interest. Hammerton laughed reassuringly and, seizing Lane by the shoulder, forced him with an air of amused tolerance to a seat on a windfall.

"Now let's stay right here, Lane. We can't find a better place for eating lunch," he laughingly insister. "This little wind shouldn't fease a Green Mountain boy!"

"Oh, all right, if you say so," Lane grudgingly assented, and turning away from the view nervously attacked the cold snack they had brought with them.

"Great view this," Hammerton remarked genially, and scanned the panorama with appreciative and curious eyes. Something over on the slope of a high hill which had been denuded of timber seemed to hold his glance. He looked curiously at Lane, who seemed oblivious to everything but the sandwich he was munching.

"That's Overlook Mountain, isn't it?" Hammerton asked, pointing to the scarred eminence. "Ever been over this way before?"

"That's what they call it, I think," responded Lane, glancing up. "Yes, I've been looking around some hereabouts. Better eat your share of lunch, or it'll all be gone."

The slope of Overlook Mountain was dotted here and there with clear evidence of earth borings, and Lane knew that the practiced eye of the bauxite expert had instantly discovered the indications of recent tests. When they finished their lunch, Hammerton seemed quite as willing as Lane that they return to the hotel, and they struck off in nearly a straight line for the town, having mutually agreed that they had shot enough game for one day's sport.

They ate supper together that evening, but both appeared tired from the day's tramping and separated soon after the meal to go to their rooms. When Lane went to bed his mind was busy with a variety of thoughts which, however, did not prevent him from falling instantly into untroubled slumber.

The next morning Hammerton did not appear, and Lane learned from the clerk that he had departed at daylight in a livery rig, saying that he was called away suddenly and would return in a day or two. This was exactly what Lane had expected, and after breakfast he, too, left the hotel.

On the second morning following, Lane returned to Hickstown. While seated in the hotel office happily immersed in a letter from Patty, he was brought back to a realization of his immediate affairs by a heavy slap on the shoulder. Hammerton stood before him, a self-satisfied grin curving his lips.

"Well, my boy," he rumbled, "that was a corking fine bauxite deposit you uncovered there on Overlook Mountain! Just finished getting under option what I didn't buy outright. Cost me so far $15,000, and worth a whole lot more."

"Do you mean the land that we could see from where we ate our lunch the day we went after turkey?" Lane asked the question coolly.

"Sure. I'd be willing to bet you couldn't keep away from your discovery if I gave you plenty of rope. And you weren't quick enough to keep the old man from spotting it, either, when you tried to turn back." He chuckled gleefully over the memory.

"You're certain it was my discovery you're speaking of?" Lane persisted, seemingly unable to understand the full significance of what he heard.

"You bet I am. It's the slope you tested to a depth of thirty-two feet. Phew! that must have been some work. Saved me a lot, for I only had to look at the cores to see the value of it."

"Then you just depended on what you found on the surface? Didn't make any borings at all?"

"Didn't have to. Don't you think I know bauxite when I see it? Why, my boy, I'm the head of the mining department of the Aluminum Products Corporation, and I can tell the hydrate as far as my eyesight carries."

"Well, all I can say is you're as fine an example of business buccaneer as ever cruised on land. You only lack a cutlass and a red bandanna around your head to complete the picture of one of your distant relatives who looted ships."

Hammerton exploded into a roar of genial laughter. "Why, bless me, my boy," he gurgled, "you flatter me. Can't make me mad. We've got to have bauxite, and if we can't get it one way, why we must another."

"Glad you feel flattered," Lane responded dryly. "But seriously, I can't understand why a level-headed business man would be willing to pay out several thousand dollars for land merely on the strength of surface indications."

"Why, what do you mean, boy?" A note of worry crept into his voice. Lane's confident tone was slightly disconcerting. "Only that you'd better make some borings yourself." Lane eyed the puzzled expert with a tolerant smile.

"Let's have it. Where did my foot slip?" demanded Hammerton with a mirthless grin. Something in Lane's manner convinced him that he had erred at some point in his piratical operations.

Lane recounted his experiences up to the time when Hammerton had recognized him at the hotel as the son of an old friend, not omitting the details of his knowledge of Hammerton's espionage from the time of the latter's visit to Mapletown. The expert's face grew longer and longer as the tale proceeded, but he permitted himself the indulgence of an occasional grin of somewhat sheepish quality as his sense of humor rescued him from utter humiliation.

"But I don't understand yet how you've ditched me," he complained as Lane paused. "I've cinched that rich slope of Overlook Mountain, haven't I? That's the main point."

"Yes, you've got hold of the south slope of Overlook Mountain, all right, and it's a fine sheep pasture, though rather expensive at the price you paid for it; but all the bauxite it holds is in the cores of my borings of the north slope which my friend Jud Waring carried over and spread around. That was while you were trying to pump me here at the hotel and during the morning of our turkey hunt, you know. Jud bored some holes in the south slope and threw the cores in the river, leaving those from my tract around the openings. I've got the deeds to my land in my pocket. Want to buy it?"

Hammerton rose and pulled himself together with an effort. His face gradually worked itself back into its habitual state of good natured arrogance. Finally the old smile came back and expanded into a laugh of fairly generous proportions, and he slapped Lane almost affectionately on the back.

"You're one wise boy, Lane. I must be getting old. You've certainly put it all over me this trip. Yes, I'll buy your land—pay you four times what you've spent on it. I'm empowered, you know, to pick up any bauxite tracts I locate Will you sell?"

"Yes, the amount satisfies me. When do you pay it?" Lane almost felt sorry for the man he had bested; he was a good loser, and his crestfallen manner was quite pathetic.

"I'll go out tomorrow and sink a few holes in both slopes just for luck, and then when I've proved it up I'll wire from Chattanooga for the money and take over your deeds there. So long, Pierpont." He bestowed a parting grin of admiration on his late adversary and went off to his room to pack up.

Lane waited until he disappeared around the bend in the stairway, and then rushed over to the railroad depot and sent off three telegrams: One to Patty, one to his father, and the other to the owner of the farm on which a little white-painted, green-shuttered house nestled in a grove of maples.

HE'S IN FRANCE

"Where is Casey of baseball fame?
Things were soft if he pitched the game,
For no one could solve his terrible slants,"
"Just lend an ear and I'll fill it full;
This is straight—no idle bull—
He's in France."
"He's in France?"
Yep, he's in France."

"And the gink who always arose at dawn
To water the trees and mow the lawn,
And tend to all the shrubs and plants?"
"Listen, pal, didn't you hear?
Where've you been for the past half year?
He's in France."
"He's in France?"
"Certainly, he's in France."

"Well, where's the guy who watched the door
Down at the big department store,
Uniform with striped pants?"
"Do you mean to tell me you don't know?
Wake up, pardner, you're getting slow
He's in France."
"He's in France?"
"Of course, he's in France!"

"But where is little Eleanore Burke
Who was interested in Red Cross work—
So timid she couldn't return a glance?"
"Say, haven't you heard the news before,
Or didn't you know there was a war?
She's in France."
"She's in France?"
"Sure, she's in France."

—GARRETT PRICE.

Too Hasty.

A TALL official looking man with a pocketbook in his hand called upon a suburban resident and observed:

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Jones, but I believe you possess a—ah, yes, a black retriever dog, with a white patch on his breast."

Visions of unpaid dog taxes arose before Mr. Jones and he said:

"Oh, no, dear, no. He is a poor stray brute."

"Oh, indeed," said the stranger, "the fact is my client, Mr. Smith, shot the dog this morning, and I came round to compromise the matter by offering you $25, but, of course, if he is not your dog, why—good morning!"

Sorry for Uncle.

A LITTLE boy, who was gazing very intently at the bald spot on the back of uncle's head, was asked by his mother what he was thinking about.

"Oh," said the little chap, smiling, as he got near the door, "I am so sorry for uncle! Not much coming up on his allotment."

PATRIOTIC PETE
PETE ELIMINATES KAISER AGENTS
KAMERAD
PETE, YOU MUST GET RID OF THOSE TOMATO WORMS.
YES
ONE HOUR LATER.
FOR YOUR SERVICE IN DESTROYING GARDENS!
MR TOMATO WORM.
JUST LET ME GET AT THOSE KAISER AGENTS!
COME TO SUPPER, PETE.
NOTHING DOING 'TIL THESE PESTS ARE GONE!!

The Farm Day.

A Vermont husbandman hired as a helper a youth living on the adjoining place. The hand was told to report for duty on the following day.

At his customary rising hour of four A. M. the employer got up, dressed, lit a lantern and went forth to start the chores. He fed the stock, milked three cows, split some wood, and, single-handed, ministered to the chickens, meantime filled with wonder, which turned to disgust, at the unaccountable tardiness of his employe.

At ten minutes after 5 o'clock, when the first pink streaks of dawn were reddening the eastern sky, the new hand came round the corner of the barn.

The farmer dropped the fork he was wielding and stared long and hard at the tardy one.

"Wall," he asked in tones of heavy sarcasm, "whar have you been the hull forenoon?"

Doctors Were Ever Thus.

The librarian at a certain museum was engaged in cataloging and arranging some ancient books that had just arrived from Egypt, when he noticed a perplexed look on the face of his assistant.

"What's the matter, Brown?" he asked. "Is there anything that you don't understand?"

"Yes," answered Brown. "Here is a small papyrus on which the characters are not decipherable. How shall I class it?"

"Hm," thoughtfully returned the librarian, examining the papyrus. "Suppose you call it a doctor's prescription in the time of Pharaoh!"

A Bit Thick.

"The Germans exaggerate their submarine murders as the old settlers exaggerated their fog yarns."

The speaker was a champion flier of the Hempstead aviation camp. He went on:

"An old settler took a chew and said: "'The worst fog I ever seen was back in '74. I remember I had to go to the henhouse that night, and the fog was so blame thick I had to get the three hired men to push me thru it.'

"'I remember that there '74 fog well,' said the second old settler, 'but it wan't nothin' to the '63 one. That was a fog! Solid! Why, us boys sat on the fence back of the distillery all that day makin' fog balls an' heavin' 'em at the people that went by.'"

The Lesson.

"If a civilian should make insulting remarks in a public house," said the officer, "and endeavor to quarrel, the well conducted soldier should drink his beer and go away."

Later on the men were again asked as to whether they understood him or not.

"Now, Private Feeler, what would you do if you were in a hotel and a civilian tried to quarrel with you?"

"I should drink his beer, sir, and 'ook it," replied the recruit.

Fifty-Fifty.

"Don't imagine," she said, "that I would consent to be your wife just because I have permitted you to kiss me."

"Oh, very well," he replied, "but don't get it into your head that I'm going to ask you to be my wife just because I insisted on kissing you."

His Financial Measure.

Lady (entering bank very business-like)—"I wish to get a Liberty Loan bond for my husband."

Clerk—"What size, please?"

Lady—"Why, I don't believe I know exactly, but he wears a fifteen shirt."

The Hobo—"Will dat dog bite me, lady?"

The Lady—"That's what I'm waiting to see. If he cares anything about his home he will."

Pride Before a Fall.

In his lecture on "War Aims and Peace" at Queen's Hall the Earl of Denbigh incidentally told an excellent story. A friend of his took prisoner an elderly German officer, who was very nasty about it, and remarked that he could console himself by the thought that his officer son was killing "twenty pigs of Englishmen a day." When the captive arrived at Southampton a cheery voice came from the quay: "Hullo, father! Have they got you, too?"

Absent Minded.

Here is a "substitution" story that will take a lot of beating. It concerns a farmer who was given a floor walker as a farm laborer. The first morning he said to his new hand, "Take a horse and go to the station for a load of potatoes." When he arrived the station agent said, "All right, but how are you going to take them without a cart?" "Dear me," said the man, "I've forgotten the cart."

Learned from Father.

"James married a magician's daughter and found she understood her father's art."

"How so?"

"He had asked her hand in marriage, but he found it in his pocket."

Too Suggestive.

"Why did Gladys break off her engagement with Harold?"

"I think it was because he asked her if she expected a raise in salary this fall."

HER SIRE'S CONSENT.

"Yes, tho it grieves me," he began,
"I cannot pay her bills, young man.
This lifts the load, to some extent,
Take her—you have my full consent."

No Cause for Worry.

The other afternoon a woman rushed excitedly down an alley in a poor quarter of Manchester, and, stopping at a house, knocked loudly. Receiving no reply, she knocked a second time. Still no answer.

A third time she knocked, and then a window above was hastily flung open and a woman whose appearance betrayed signs of a sudden awakening leaned out.

"Well, what is it?" she asked.

The woman below looked up and explained, with bated breath: "Mrs. Skinner, yer 'usband's got ten days."

"Dear, dear me, Mrs. Jones," was the reply, "is that all? 'Ow yer did unnerve me! Ah thought it was that scarecrow after the rent again."

Just a Little Strategy.

"What is it that makes you find so much fault with your stenographer?"

"Well, she's the best stenographer I ever had, and I don't want to lose her. So I've got to shout around a little so as to convey the impression to any stenographer scouts that she wouldn't suit the Government."

Well Named.

Old Lady — "Can you tell me what is inside the sandbags, young man?"

Special Constable — "Sand, ma'am — hence the name."

In One Case.

"Did the young couple we were talking of take a flat?"

"I don't know about the couple, but I know the bride did."

Good Rule.

The text was, "Be ye therefore steadfast."

Mary came and announced the text as "Be ye there for breakfast."

What He Got.

A well-known lawyer is accustomed to lecture his office staff from the junior partner down, and Sammy, the office boy, comes in for his full share of admonition. That his words are appreciated was made evident to the lawyer recently by a conversation between Sammy and another office boy on the same floor.

"What you get?" asked the other boy.

"Ten thousand a year," the lawyer overheard his own boy reply.

"Aw, g'wan!"

"Sure," insisted Sammy, unabashed. "Four dollars a week in cash and the rest in legal advice."

His Place in the Sun.

If the Kaiser is still looking for a place in the sun, we know where he can get an all-summer job on an American farm, with board and lodging and as much as $30 a month in cash.

Blunderby on the Force.

"What is this man charged with?" demanded the magistrate.

"Bigotry, judge," replied the officer: "he's got three wives."

Prevented.

"That novel has had a remarkable sale," commented the bookstore man.

"Have you read it?"

"Oh, no! I wouldn't dare read it, as my duties require me to be enthusiastic in recommending it to others."

Boy—"No, I won't sell this big trout, so don't ask!"

Trout Fisherman—"But at least let me measure him so I can say truthfully just how big the trout was that got away from me!"

A B C Class.

"The examination you undergo for the position of teacher is very severe, is it not?"

"I should say so."

"What are the branches?"

"Well, today we were examined in psychology, integral calculus, mathematical analysis and Greek versification."

"Indeed? What position are you competing for?"

"Instructor of the A B C class."

Commonplace.

Irvin Cobb, the writer, was awe-struck by the terrific roar of an artillery preparation in Picardy.

But several American privates who stood near him were soon bored.

"This is all there is to it, I guess," said one of them. "The Heinies aren't going to shoot back. I guess I'll go hit the hay."

Fine for the Face.

"We are using artificial pies in all our comedies now," said the motion picture producer.

"That's a patriotic thing to do."

"Yes, and we get better results with imitations than we used to get with the real article. Our property man has invented a pie that smears magnificently."

Compensation.

Popleigh—"House cleaning is not so bad after all."

Parks—"How can you say that?"

Popleigh—"Well, my wife has lent the baby to its grandmother for a whole week."

GOOD FOR ART.

I never had a broken heart
(I've always been a shy one).
I hear they're splendid for one's art.
I'd really like to try one.

Of Course.

An official who was making up an assessment roll because of some recent street improvements, called at each house on the improved streets to learn the names of the property owners. At one house he climbed out of his car, went to the door and knocked.

"Who owns this property?" he asked.

"Why, I do," the woman answered.

The official got her name and put it down in his book. Then he took a squint at the size of the lot.

"How many feet?" he asked.

"Two, of course!" the woman snapped, wondering whether he thought she was a centipede.

Threatened to Strike.

"Well, if that ain't the limit," mused the postman, as he came down the steps of a private residence.

"What's the trouble?" queried the mere citizen who had overheard the postman's noisy thought.

"Why," explained the man in grey, "the woman in that house says if I don't come earlier she'll get her letters from some other carrier."

Bouncers for Bores.

Customer—"These chairs may be fashionable, but they are extremely uncomfortable."

Salesman—"Ah, that's the beauty of these chairs, madam. When a caller sits in one of them she doesn't stay long."

His Advantage.

Heck—"Yes, I have met your wife. In fact, I knew her before you married her."

Peck—"Ah! That's where you had the advantage of me—I didn't."

Fine.

Everything was ready for kit inspection, the recruits stood lined up ready for the officer, and the officer had his bad temper all complete. He marched up and down the line, grimly eyeing each man's bundle of needles and soft soap, and then he singled out Private MacToole as the man who was to receive his attention.

"Toothbrush?" he roared.

"Yes, sir."

"Razor?"

"Yes, sir."

"Hold-all?"

"Yes, sir."

"Um! You're all right, apparently," growled the officer. Then he barbed:

"Housewife?"

"Oh, very well, thank you," said the recruit amiably. "How's yours?"

Considerate.

The poor fellow at the end of the table looked so unhappy that even the landlady's stony heart was moved.

"How do you like the chicken soup, Mr. Jones?" she asked, by way of saying something.

"Oh, er—is this chicken soup?" he blurted out.

"Certainly. How do you like it?"

"Well—er—it's certainly very tender," said he, apologetically.

A Sympathetic Coroner.

"And was her death sudden?" asked the coroner of the principal witness.

"Yes," was the reply. "The fall knocked her senseless, and she never spoke a word afterward."

"Poor woman!" sighed the coroner, who was a married man of long standing. "What an awful sad death!"

"Willie, stand in front of me for a moment. I want to fix my stocking."

Palindromes.

83—1. Reverse a mechanical power and have a feast.
2. Reverse a twist of thread and have music.
3. Reverse one afflicted with a disease mentioned in Scripture and have to resist.
4. Reverse a beverage and make it royal.
5. Reverse the evil one and have resided.
6. Reverse attracts and have a meadow.
7. Reverse a female name and have a Southern vegetable.
8. Reverse a male name and have done wrong.
9. Reverse a falsifier and have a banister.
10. Reverse a measure and make an opening.
11. Reverse a disposition and form a destiny.
12. Reverse a liquor and create a crime.

Mixed Sweets.

84—The candy man has a popular mixture of two kinds of candy, one of which cost him 20 cents a pound and the other 30 cents a pound. He mixed up fifty pounds, which he disposed of at 30 cents a pound, thereby making a profit of 25 per cent. Can you tell what proportion of the mixture was 30-cent candy?

Authors, Well Known.

85—Friday was an unlucky ***. It seemed as tho nothing went ******. Wednesday my ****, a fiery-tempered *****, left, saying she was going back to *******. I engaged an English girl who said she had cooked for the best families in ******, but she burned the ***** for breakfast, the **** for dinner was underdone, and the ***** peas were poorly seasoned. My niece, who is also my ****, dined with us, and a friend of Hugh's, a *********, fond of jest, who can bring ****** to the soberest faces; and the defects in the cooking were no real **** to our enjoyment. During the forenoon a looking-glass in one of the ******** fell, breaking in many pieces, and a string in the ***** piano snapped. I sat down to ***** a new book and found a **** torn out in several places. A bird ****** a tree close by, and being a joyous ******* when a boy aimed a stone at him, hit my window and broke a large ******. The gardener told me the ********* that I thought was a ***** little tree, was dead, and the puppy tore my new *** scarf. The last thing at night, the housemaid, an unusually ***** girl, gave warning, saying she was going to marry a ******, whom she met at the ***** near Buffalo last summer. She was dressed in *****, and a ******* was around her hat. He lost his *****, the courtship was *****, and the ***** will soon be united. That is ****** happens I must look for a new maid. I **** it will be long ere I have another ***** Friday.

Name Puzzle.

86—What is the name of the small boy whose father used his name and no other words in a command to push his way into a crowded jitney

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES.

79. Diagonal.

I O N I C
O Z O N E
N O V E L
I N E P T
C E L T S

80. Anagram.

Tennyson.

81. Forward and Backward.

1. Dab-bad. 2. Star-rats. 3. Leek-keel. 4. Gas-sag. 5. Reed-deer. 6. Wed.-dew. 7. Raw-war. 8. Den-Ned.

82. Beheadings.

1. Snap-Nap.
2. Year-ear.
3. Bail-all.

It is not desired that readers send in the answers to the puzzles. They are printed simply as brain teasers, and the correct answers will be printed the following week.

She—"John, if you were half a man you would lift me over this fence."

CHICAGO LEDGER

[Copyright, 1918, by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

Published Every Saturday

By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Single subscriptions to the Chicago Ledger by mail $1.50 a year (52 issues), $1.00 for eight months, six months 75 cents, in advance. Remittances should be made by Bank Draft, Registered Letter, Postoffice or Express Money Order, payable to the Chicago Ledger. The address tab on your paper shows the date to which your subscription is paid.

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For Display, $2.45 each Agate Line; for Classified, 30 cents a word, per insertion for circulation of the Chicago Ledger and The Saturday Blade combined.

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GENTLE JABS.

Some dead Huns have been canonized.

Pretension isn't natural—nature never pretends.

Too many blows will extinguish the light of love.

Solitaire is one of the few games that two cannot play.

Negotiations are frequently opened up with a corkscrew.

Many a man who was born to succeed dies of heart failure.

Thoughts that disturb men most never enter a woman's head.

No man is a coward who has been married more than once.

Women will do as much for love as man will do for money.

Riches have wings—that's why the poor are always with us.

The worst thing about being a hero is trying to look the part.

Men with money can keep their friends by not lending it to them.

In a conflict between two women each struggles for the last word.

A gentleman always shuts his eyes when he looks at a lady's faults.

It doesn't take much work to convince a man that he needs a rest.

A girl that flirts is like a counterfeit coin—she never gets the true ring.

Success never roosts on the banner of the man who can't rely upon himself.

And a married woman's ideal man is one who thinks he has an ideal wife.

Some married men repent in haste and some bachelors contemplate at leisure.

When the mercury reaches the zero point the plumber has a lead pipe cinch.

There are fewer matter-of-fact men in the world than matter-of-falsehood men.

Many a man is forced to play the game of life who doesn't hold a single trump.

There is a private cemetery in the corner of every heart where fond hopes are interred.

Most things that we learn from experience come under the head of compulsory education.

Even after a man reaches his bottom dollar he usually has something left to build hopes upon.

If a man is abused while on earth and praised after shuffling off this mortal coil—well, that's fame.

The woman who paints her pale cheeks pink may look with scorn and contempt upon the woman who has occasion to dye her hair red.

Your Kitchen in War Time

Tomatoes for Winter and Summer Use

BY MARY FULLER WEST.

WHILE the tomato does not offer much food value, it contains certain mineral salts which are needed in nourishing the body, and because of these should be used freely both in summer and winter. This year the tomato crop bids fair to be unusually large, which will afford every housekeeper a chance to use the tomato freely, as well as to preserve large quantities for use in winter.

The tomato has the rare quality of combining well with many foods and may be used as a fruit as well as a vegetable. Also, it may be so prepared that it can be placed on the table as a condiment or relish. Tomatoes may be combined with lemons, grapefruit or tangelos, measure for measure of sugar, to make a fine marmalade, which is a good substitute for butter. With chopped nuts and oranges, they make a fine conserve.

However, many housekeepers prefer to prepare tomatoes plain for winter use, and for this purpose the cold-pack method is the best. Tomatoes canned this way take only twenty-two minutes for boiling in the bath or processing. Every pantry should boast of at least thirty quarts of tomatoes prepared this way, since they will furnish the basis of endless combinations of food next winter.

Tomatoes and corn in equal quantities may be canned. This must be processed two hours. Tomatoes, corn and lima beans put up together also require the same length of time. Below are furnished a few good recipes for preparing tomatoes in novel ways. When cooked this way they may be served now or kept for winter. They are well worth trying, many of them being tested recipes sent out by the United States Food Administration.

CHILI SAUCE, COOKED—Ten tomatoes, three onions, one-half cup of sugar, three cups of vinegar, four green peppers, one teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoonful of cinnamon, one-half teaspoonful of paprika, one teaspoonful of celery seed.

Chop tomatoes and onions; mix all ingredients, boil until thick and smooth. Seal in sterilized jars.

TOMATO PASTE—One quart thick strained tomato pulp, four tablespoonfuls chopped sweet red pepper pulp or one teaspoonful of paprika, one slice of onion, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoonful of sugar, one tablespoonful of mixed spices—cinnamon, cloves, allspice.

Cook spices, tied in a bag, with tomato pulp in a pan over boiling water for three hours, or until the paste is thick enough to hold shape of a spoon when tested by dipping out a spoonful. Pack in sterilized jars hot, process fifteen minutes in water bath at 212 degrees Fahrenheit for pint jars.

ITALIAN TOMATO PASTE—One peck of tomatoes, one tablespoonful of salt, one tablespoonful of olive oil.

Wash and cut up ripe tomatoes; stew until tender, put thru sieve; add salt and one tablespoonful of olive oil for every quart. Boil until thick and creamy. Seal in sterilized jars.

ITALIAN PASTE, DRIED—One peck of tomatoes, olive oil. Cook until done. Strain thru sieve. Cook until thick. Spread on a clean, smooth board. Dry in the sun (protect by mosquito netting from flies). When dry pack in crocks or cups or any earthern container. Cover with olive oil.

TOMATO CONSERVE—One quart of yellow or red tomatoes, three lemons, two ounces of candied ginger, one pound of sugar (brown).

Plunge in hot water, then in cold water. Slip skins. Cut lemons in halves, squeeze out juice, remove seeds, stir into sugar. If necessary add a little water to dissolve sugar. Let boil with ginger two minutes, add tomatoes, cook until clear. Put in sterilized pint or half pint jars.

CHOW CHOW—Four quarts of green tomatoes, four green peppers, two onions, three tablespoonfuls of celery seed, one tablespoonful whole cloves, one teaspoonful of paprika, four tablespoonfuls of salt, one tablespoonful of mustard seed, one tablespoonful horseradish sauce, two cups of chopped cabbage, one cup of chopped cucumber, half cup of sugar.

Remove seeds from tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers. Chop all fine. Sprinkle over with four tablespoonfuls of salt. Let stand all night; drain. Throw away the liquor. Mix all ingredients thoroly. Fill sterilized jars (glass tops must be used) nearly full. Pour over cold vinegar. Be sure that jar is very full. Seal. Keep in the dark.

TOMATO CATCHUP—Four quarts of tomatoes, one-half teaspoonful of black pepper, one-half teaspoonful of paprika, one tablespoonful of cloves and one tablespoonful of allspice (whole, tied in a bag), two large onions, mixed.

Cook until thoroly tender. Strain thru a sieve. Return to stove, boil until thick. Seal in sterilized jars.

Peach Cobbler.

BUTTER a deep pudding dish and butter the outside of a half pint bowl or teacup and place it in the center of the pudding dish. Fill the space around the cup with peeled and sliced ripe peaches. Sprinkle with sugar and dot over with 1½ tablespoons of butter and a sprinkle of nutmeg. Cover with a crust made as follows: Sift together 1 cup each of wheat and corn or barley flour, ½ teaspoon of salt and 4 teaspoons of baking powder; with the tips of the fingers rub in 2 tablespoons of shortening. Add ¾ cup of milk and 1 egg beaten until thick and lemon tinted. Mix well. Turn on a lightly floured board, knead slightly, and roll to ½ inch thickness; cover peaches, forte rim with fingers, make 2 or 3 gashes in the top to allow the steam to escape, and bake 35 minutes in a hot oven. Loosen rim with a thin knife, and invert cobbler on a deep platter; the cup will be filled with a delicious peach sirup to be used as sauce; if not enough to moisten well, pass sweetened cream in a pitcher.

This is an old-fashioned dessert. It is so wholesome and fitting that it should be served at the conclusion of a light dinner or made the "chief dish" at a home luncheon. Serve with it iced tea, coffee or hot cocoa.

Liberty Coffee Cake (No Wheat).

TWO cups brown sugar, 1 cup corn flour, 3 tablespoons butter substitute, 1 cup sour milk or cream, 1 cup rice flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1 well beaten egg, 1 teaspoon soda.

Work the sugar, rice flour, corn flour and fat together as in making pie crust. When well mixed set aside 1 cupful and to the remainder add the beaten egg, the sour milk or cream, the soda dissolved in boiling water, and enough rice or corn flour or both mixed to make a batter like loaf cake. If milk is very thick ½ cup of flour is sufficient. Put in a large shallow pan which has been buttered and floured and sprinkle the cupful of first mixture over the top. For special occasions a few chopped nut meats may also be added to the top. Bake in a moderate oven. Nice to serve with tea or coffee. (A whole cup of the first mixture for the top is rather generous.)

Hominy and Walnut Croquette.

TO TWO cups of cooked granulated hominy, add 1 cup of chopped English walnut meats, 1 tablespoon of melted butter, yolks of 2 raw eggs or 1 whole egg, ½ teaspoonful of grated onion, ½ teaspoon of finely chopped parsley, and salt, pepper and a few grains of cayenne to season to taste. Mix ingredients thoroly. With the hands (slightly buttered) shape into balls the size of a lemon. Roll in fine cracker crumbs, then in egg slightly beaten and diluted with 2 tablespoons of milk, and again in crumbs. Fry in deep hot vegetable fat; drain on brown paper. Arrange on hot serving platter and pour around tomato sauce.

Cheese sauce may be used in place of tomato sauce. These croquettes are an excellent substitute for meat, having a high food value by the addition of nut meats and the cheese sauce. Served at dinner, luncheon or supper, it makes an ideal hot weather dish.

Tiptop Dill Pickles.

USE cucumbers from 3 to 5 inches long and not too thick. Wash them thoroly. Place a layer of grape leaves in the bottom of your crock or keg, then a layer of cucumbers, two or three apples quartered without paring, a few bunches of green grapes or stalks of pieplant, two or three onions sliced, two handfuls of mixed whole spices and three handfuls of dill tops and seeds. Repeat until the keg is full, placing a layer of grape leaves on top. Then dissolve 1½ pounds of salt in eight gallons cold water, and pour this over the pickles until they are covered. Next, weight them down and in two weeks they will be ready for use.

Bran Cookies.

CREAM together one-half cup sugar and one-half cup shortening, add two eggs well beaten, then two-thirds cup of milk gradually. Mix three cups bran, one and one-half cups flour and two level teaspoons of salt and add chopped raisins and nuts if desired. If the dough cannot be handled, add a little more flour. Roll out thin, cut with a cookie cutter and bake in a quick oven from eight to ten minutes.

The Modern Rush.

FOR some minutes the little stenographer sat meditatively watching the bookkeeper as he added up figures with a rapidity that awed her.

"You've got it, too!" she exclaimed, suddenly, aloud.

The bookkeeper jumped nervously. "Goodness! I never realized before how loud your voice is," he explained, endeavoring to erase the blot he had made.

"Oh, no, it wasn't my voice—it's just another symptom. I've been sitting here watching you—"

"And you thought I didn't know it!" The bookkeeper laughed. "Why, everything I've been doing was for your special amusement—and you thought I was all unconscious of your observation! Now who is the joke on?"

The little stenographer smiled pityingly. "It's nothing to be so much ashamed of—not half so bad as telling falsehoods on top of it," she said in a tone of reproof. "You know as well as I do that until I spoke and you jumped a mile you'd forgotten that I was alive—you didn't know there was a thing on earth but figures; and you were just racing with yourself to see how much faster you could go. Deny it if you dare!"

"Well?" The tone of the bookkeeper was an invitation to continue.

"Well, I've been thinking and thinking, and I've heard a couple of talks lately on the subject of the rapid living of our age. Every man is trying to outdo himself and every other man he knows. He doesn't have time to live or to let others live!

"There's Mr. Brown in there," she went on. "You know he hasn't been in this country very long, for he had charge of the Berlin branch of the business for years. Well, he talks against this fast age as bitterly as any one I ever heard, but he's getting it so bad himself that I'm willing to wager that before long he'll beat every one of you! He used to tell me how men in Germany worked to live—they don't live to work! He said that in the middle of the afternoon every one stopped work and had their coffee. Then they stopped work long before evening, so that they could enjoy the daytime in pleasant weather. Work was necessary, but they didn't believe that working was all they were made for.

"He used to talk and talk about it, and he used to run down this country so dreadfully that I would really get angry with him, and feel like telling him that he had no business accepting the country's hospitality if he couldn't talk any better of it than he did!

"Then what do you suppose happened? You know we've always had vacations on the principal holidays—the other men never dreamed of questioning it. But the day before Washington's birthday, Mr. Brown was alone in the department and he called me in and asked me if it was regular to have a holiday. I said it was, and he said that he'd have to look into it. So what did he do but call up every Tom, Dick and Harry on the street to find out who was going to keep open. I think he found two or three out of them all who were coming downtown, so he turned to me and said he was sorry, but some people were going to keep open and we'd better come down for half a day anyway, for you never could tell what might come up, and we'd be sure not to miss anything if we were here! So, just because of a possible chance that something might come up I had to stay in this office all morning! And poor Mr. Brown is unuable to see that he has changed his views at all!

"I tell you, it's catching, and you'll all wake up some fine day, when you ought to be in the very prime of your lives, and you'll find every bit of your strength and energy and life gone, and you'll all be old men when you are middle aged, and then you'll be sorry you didn't listen to reason when it was handed to you!

"There you sat just now, adding up figures as if your life depended upon it, and turning pages so fast that one would think it a matter of life and death, and for what earthly reason? I don't care if Mr. Brown does get the hurry habit desperately bad, but for pity's sake don't you go and get it too deep to get out!"

"Well, well!" said the bookkeeper. "You've entertained me so well that here it is 5 o'clock and—"

"Mercy!" interrupted the little stenographer, wildly, making a dash for her hat. "Five o'clock! And I have a lesson to take at 5:30, and it'll take me years to get there, the trains are so slow. I've an engagement right after supper, too! It's just dreadful that things are so far apart in this city—you don't have time to eat your meals!"

Classified.

THE son of a rich father decided he ought to enlist, and went to the recruiting station. He was asked his occupation.

"Why-er-well, just running thru the guv'nor's money, don't you know," was the reply.

The officer seemed in doubt how to classify him, when a corporal standing near came to his assistance with a brilliant suggestion.

"Put him down as a brass finisher, sir," he said.

It's Your Patriotic Duty to Read This Entire Serial

HIS NEXT OF KIN

By William Bratten

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CHAPTER XIII (CONTINUED.)

"I'M SO glad you're here, Mr. Lovell," she began, her nervousness leaving her as she spoke. "I've just heard of a poor woman, of German birth, whose son has been drafted. She has not received any of the allotment from his pay and is in actual want. But the worst of it is that she lives in a neighborhood that is intensely pro-German. They are furious at her because she allowed her boy to go to fight for our country. They say she should have made him claim exemption. As a result of her not doing so, her neighbors are resorting to all the things the Germans do to make life miserable for a person in this woman's position. They——"

"Just a moment, please," interrupted Lovell. "You speak of 'all things the Germans do.' Will you kindly be more specific? What things, for instance?"

"Why, don't you know?" she asked. "I supposed everybody knew about them."

"That's just the trouble," returned the chairman of the Wells Neighborhood Chapter. "People like you, who know the actual conditions and facts, seem to take it for granted that all other people know about them; whereas, as a matter of fact, very few of us do.

"Here is a concrete example," he continued, turning to Judith and Marie, "of what you must all bear in mind and impress upon all members of The Next of Kin, whether in our own Chapter or in any other, that people who know of instances, or methods, of intimidation used toward any loyal American should report them to the proper authority. In order to save delay and the taking up of much time in interviews with excitable and irresponsible persons, such information should be given to the secretary of the local Chapter, or to a member of our Home Life committee. Then the case can be investigated. If it is found that action should be taken, the committee can so report to the secretary, who will, in turn, report to the American Protective League. And now go on, please, Miss Holweg. Tell us some of these things, as you call them. But first, what is the woman's name?"

"Her name is Mrs. Bertha Schenkel, S-c-h-e-n-k-e-l," spelled the girl.

"Good. Where does she live?"

"Eleven sixteen Addison street. She owns a little cottage there."

"What is her son's name?"

"Gustav."

"Do you know how old he is?"

"Twenty-two."

"Do you know where he is, or in what branch of the service?"

"Yes, both. He is in Company A, 741st Machine Gun Battalion, at Camp Dodge, Iowa."

"How long has he been there?"

"Five months."

"And you say his mother hasn't received any pay from the Government in all this time?"

"She has not."

"The Government has been slow in getting the system going. How has she lived?"

"Gustav was a gunsmith by profession. He earned good wages and, like all of his race, he saved his money. He turned what he had over to his mother. But Bertha has been imposed upon and swindled until——"

"How?" interrupted Lovell.

"Well, one fellow got $150 from her by telling her that he could get out an insurance policy on Gustav's life for $100,000 in her favor, if she gave him the money. She gave it to him—and she hasn't seen any policy yet."

"Did she get the scoundrel's name?"

"No. Not even a receipt."

"Anything else?"

"Yes. A money lender came round last week and presented what he pretended was a claim against Gustav for $800, which he said Gustav had borrowed as a mortgage upon their home to work on an invention. He threatened, unless Bertha paid it, to send the papers to Camp Dodge, and told her that they would cause Gustav to be thrown into jail for twenty years. Needless to say, he got the $800—but it took Bertha's last cent.

"Today, when she came to our house to see if mother wouldn't give her some sort of work, she said that the butcher and grocer with whom they had traded for three years refused to give her any credit. So she has no money and nothing to eat. Then sometimes the children tell her that word has come that Gustav is dead, and at other times they call her awful names, and they do no end of other things, till she is pretty nearly wild. When I came home from work tonight mother told me. Not knowing what to do, I decided to come right to you, being a member of The Next of Kin."

This Tells the Story

DICK HOWE tells his mother and sister that he is drafted and is about to leave for camp. Judith, his sister, goes out to tell her friends all about it, and in so doing stirs up such a quarrel between Mr. Jaynes and his wife and stepdaughter, Marie, that they leave his home and go with Judith. Mrs. Jaynes in speaking to Dick tells about her husband's suspicious actions. They determine to report the matter to the American Protective League, and have Jaynes, whom they suspect of being a German spy, watched. The following day Marie and Dick Howe, childhood sweethearts, are married. After his wedding, Dick Howe departs for camp, and Marie and her mother are faced with financial difficulties. Mr. Jaynes disappears from town, and with him disappear the funds on which they had planned to live. This news causes Mrs. Jaynes to collapse, and Judith and her new sister-in-law, go to seek Mr. Lovell, head of the Next of Kin Society. With the aid of Mr. Hartley, Dick's former employer, who has become interested in the Society, they solve their financial problems. Mrs. Howe and Mrs. Jaynes are to go away on a vacation while the girls stay in town as secretary and treasurer respectively of the Next of Kin Society. In the meantime, Mr. Jaynes is traced to Rawley, Texas.

The above story began in Ledger No. 31, dated August 3. Back copies can be obtained either thru office of publication, or from our newsdealers and agents.

"Which was the very thing for you to do," said Lovell. "Will you go round with me to see this woman at once? The girls will accompany us, I am sure."

"Certainly," said Esther, and they were soon on their way in the lawyer's machine, which he ordered stopped about a block from the location of the house.

As the little group carefully picked their way thru the yard to the door in the rear, they heard an angry voice:

"I tell you, you must," it exclaimed.

"But I don't care whether you are my brother or not. I will not keep a man who talks against the United States in my house," answered a woman, who Esther whispered to them was Bertha.

Then followed the sounds of a struggle.

"Quick, you girls run and get a policeman. I'll go into the house," ordered Lovell, leaping to the door.

Before he gained it, however, there reached his ears the sound of a thud, and even as his hand was on the knob of the door, it was jerked open and a man started to dash out, only to stop in amazement at the sight of the lawyer.

"What do you want?" the fellow snarled.

"You, I imagine," returned Lovell.

"Then keep on wanting," hissed the other, whipping out an ugly looking revolver. But before he got it more than out of its holster, concealed under his left arm, he was gazing into the barrel of Lovell's automatic.

"Hand over that revolver," commanded the lawyer coolly.

Giving the impression that he realized he was trapped and, therefore, was going to make the best of it, the fellow, who had announced himself as Klaus, stepped forward, at the same time preparing to surrender his shooting iron.

Quickly Lovell reached out his left hand to take it. As he did so, the German, with a lightning move, dealt the extended hand a blow which caused Lovell to jump with pain. And at the same instant the man charged him, and, bowling him over, dashed out into the yard, then into the darkness.

The Man Charged Him and, Bowling Him Over, Dashed Out Into the Yard.

Deeply chagrined, Lovell was just picking himself up when the girls, accompanied by two policemen, arrived on the scene. "Go after that man and get him, officers," commanded the lawyer. "It ought to be easy to find him."

"We got something else to do but chase around in the dark, youse," growled one of the patrolmen. "What's the row here, anyhow? And what are you doing with a gun in your hand? It looks like the station house for you. Come on."

"I have a permit for the automatic."

"Aw, tell it to the judge in the morning. I've seen wise guys like you before. Come on, now, without any more trouble, or I'll have to give youse a little persuasion," finished the officer, swinging his club significantly.

"But this is absurd," protested Lovell. "Instead of trying to arrest me, I want you to come into this house and see what has happened to the woman who lives here. When we arrived she was having trouble with some man. I——"

"Aw, cut it and come along." And the policeman was reaching out his hand to seize the lawyer, when two more policemen appeared.

"Why, Mr. Lovell, what's the trouble?" exclaimed one of them, with the insignia of a sergeant, and looking from the lawyer to the surprised officers with him.

"Thank goodness you came when you did, Harris," returned Lovell. "These brilliant specimens of police here have refused to go in search of a man who wanted to kill me and, refusing to listen to me, were going to arrest me for carrying this automatic, for which, as you know, I have a permit."

Realizing that they had got themselves into a very serious mess, the two patrolmen tried to turn the affair into a joke. "Aw, we was only joshing this fellow, Sergeant," said the one who had done all the talking. "He got flip with us, and we was putting him wise. You know," and he looked at Lovell, hard, "we was only fooling with youse."

At this further evidence of effrontery, the lawyer stared at the two policemen a moment in amazement and then exclaimed: "As you very succinctly put it to me a few moments ago, 'you can tell it to the judge in the morning.' Harris, I shall prefer charges against these two men with your captain and with the chief of police. But, in the meantime, I wish you would come into this house with me." And, with the policemen and girls at his heels, Lovell entered the door a second time.

On the floor, they discovered Mrs. Schenkel stretched out, her throat torn where the man who had called himself her brother had choked her before knocking her down.

"Probably unconscious from hitting her head on the floor," announced Sergeant Harris, after a hasty examination. "I'll send for the ambulance."

"If you don't mind, I'll take Mrs. Schenkel with me in my machine," said Lovell. "I promise you she will have the best of care. I'm going to take her to my house and keep her there for a while. So, if you catch her brother, or wish to talk with her to get an idea of where he may be, you will know where to find her."

"All right, Mr. Lovell," returned Harris. "Tom," and he turned to his fellow officer, "go down the block to where Mr. Lovell's car is standing and have the chauffeur drive it up here." And as the policeman departed, the sergeant continued: "It's a good thing I recognized your car, sir. I asked the man where you were and he gave me an idea. I've heard about your society and I know something of Mrs. Schenkel, so I decided it was here you must be. I'm only sorry I didn't get along sooner. I'll have the charges against those two fatheads drawn in the morning. If you're planning ever to come down this way again, or go into any other part of the tough sections, I'd suggest that you let some of the real men on the force know. It's a little risky, especially with young ladies."

"I realize it, now," declared the lawyer. "But so long as no actual harm has been done, it is all right, for it has given them a sight, at first hand, of some of the conditions in the city."

Their faces white, Judith and Marie had followed in dazed surprise the series of events and the realization that such things could happen appalled them, so that it was with the utmost relief they heard the call of the officer the sergeant had sent announcing that the automobile had arrived.

Stooping down, Harris picked up Mrs. Schenkel and carried her out to the machine while the others followed. Around the car was a crowd of curious neighbors, who discreetly fell back at the sight of the sergeant.

"Send them on their way, Tom," he ordered but while the crowd dispersed, there came to the ears of Lovell and the girls words which told them that

the people were glad the unfortunate woman had been beaten up.

CHAPTER XIV.
AMAZING INFORMATION.

WHEN they reached the lawyer's home, Mrs. Schenkel was still unconscious and Lovell telephoned for Dr. Perkins while the womenfolk were working over her.

"Her condition is due to lack of food more than to anything else," said the physician, after his examination. "She is not injured seriously."

Relieved, Judith and Marie left the room.

"You girls must stay here with us, tonight," said Mrs. Lovell, as they went downstairs. "Robert, you had best send Miss Holweg home in the car."

"Are you sure the house will be all right without us?" asked Judith.

"Certainly," said the lawyer. And thus reassured, the girls gladly accepted the invitation.

A good night's rest had restored their nerves and morning found the girls normal again after their unpleasant adventure.

Mrs. Schenkel has recovered consciousness and wishes to talk with you, Robert," said his wife, after a visit to the woman's room. "She was very much surprised at finding herself here and wants to know what happened."

"I think it will be well for you girls to come with me," said the lawyer to Judith and Marie. "You must realize that it is serious work that The Next of Kin has to do and the sooner you learn actual conditions, the better it will be and the more efficient will be the work you do." Accordingly, they all went to Mrs. Schenkel's room.

It did not take Mr. Lovell and his wife long to win the confidence of the unfortunate woman and when she found that they were really friends she talked freely.

"Now tell me all you can about your brother," said the lawyer, at last.

"Ah, he is my own brother but he is bad," said the woman. "He still loves the Fatherland and he hopes Germany wins."

"What is his name and where does he live?" asked the lawyer.

"His name is Fritz Klaus but he calls himself Keller and he works for a man named Jaynes."

Judith and Marie were unable to restrain little cries of surprise at this revelation. Neither of them had seen the face of the man as he had attacked Mr. Lovell the night before. The lawyer himself had never seen the Jaynes butler.

"Go on and tell us all you can about him," urged Lovell gently. But instead the woman fell to sobbing softly. It was evident that she was in no condition to indulge in prolonged conversation.

"Just one more question before we go," said Lovell. "Why did your brother attack you?"

"He told me the police were after him and he must hide until he could get out of the city. He wanted me to go out and buy him a ticket to Rawley, Texas, but I wouldn't——"

"Rawley—" broke in Lovell, "Why that is the place where your mother suggested we look for Haynes," he said, turning to Judith. Then he turned to the woman, who was looking at them with puzzled eyes, and said: "Never mind anything else. You go to sleep and don't worry. We will take care of you."

Lovell hurried from the room to communicate by telephone with Inspector Saunders, while the girls went to wait for him in the room which had been set aside as a gathering place for The Next of Kin. They found waiting there a young woman, blonde and visibly nervous.

"I want to see Miss Jaynes," she said.

"Some one probably misled you," said Marie. "I am a stepdaughter of Malcolm Jaynes, but I am now Mrs. Howe. You see," dimpling prettily, "I was married just a few days ago."

"Congratulations," said the visitor, hurriedly. "I am sure the young man is fortunate. But my errand here is on a matter of business. Mr. Jaynes discharged me early in this week and told me to come back to the office the next day and he would pay me in full and give me an extra week's pay besides. But I went to both offices and he wasn't there. So I went over to his home and they told me to come here and ask for you. Seems like there is a lot of police around the house and some fellow inside won't give up. Believe me, I beat it away from there——"

"Are you Hilda Burnquist?" Marie broke in on the visitor's chatter.

The visitor showed surprise. "That's me. How did you know? Jaynes told me he never told anything about his business at home. Now about my money ——"

"I'm afraid I can't help you," said Marie. "You see, Mr. Jaynes has left town and cannot be located. My husband tried to find you to see if you knew where Mr. Jaynes was. If he owed me only a week or two of salary I wouldn't care. But he took with him not only all the money my father left me, but all of my mother's money, as well. So we are in the same boat."

Hilda Burnquist rose angrily. "The dirty, double crossin' crook," she said. "I knew he wasn't on the square by having two offices and not wanting people to know about one of them and meeting those durn Germans and getting mixed up in the affairs of the Government——"

"Wait a minute. Wait a minute." It was Mr. Lovell, who interrupted. Having finished his conversation with Inspector Saunders he had entered the room and had been just in time to hear the latter part of Hilda Burnquist's statement.

"How much do you know about Jaynes' business?" he asked.

"How much do I know?" Hilda's voice was scornful. "I know a whole lot more than he thought I did, the crook. Trust little Hilda to keep her eyes and ears open. I know enough to put him where the buzzards won't get him, and I'm going to tell it just as soon as I get down to the right Government sleuth. Oh, I know a-plenty, I do."

"I know just the man for you to see," said the lawyer.

"Any man's the right man for me to see if he's the man who can put Jaynes where he belongs," retorted the girl. "Lead me to him."

Thus it was that half an hour later Hilda Burnquist was telling what she knew about Malcolm Jaynes while Inspector Saunders and Mr. Lovell interestedly listened.

Stripped of the girl's airy persiflage, the story was a remarkable tale of how in one of the largest cities of the United States a man, posing as an investment broker and stocks salesman, had been carrying on propaganda and spy work for Germany for years before the world had become embroiled in the greatest war of history—almost openly until the United States had taken a hand and more secretly, following that momentous event. By keeping her eyes and ears open and her mouth shut the girl soon after she had become an employe had discovered some of Jaynes' treachery against the Nation which had sheltered him. Fearlessly she had used some of this information to compel Jaynes to pay her a great deal more than a mere stenographer and secretary usually earns, then, as his confidence in her grew, she had become in a measure one of his confidantes to the extent that he had taken little pains to conceal from her the nefarious schemes in which he was so deeply involved.

"As long as America stayed out of it it wasn't any of my concern which side was whipped over there," she confessed, naively. "You know all my folks are Swedish born, so we didn't have any blood ties either way. I spoke to Mr. Jaynes about it after the United States got in, and he agreed with me that we were all Americans now and he told me he had nothing more to do with Germany. But I guess he lied, altho I didn't see anything suspicious after that."

"I Know Enough to Put Him Where the Buzzards Won't Get Him."

It was two hours before the girl had finished her story, carefully drawn from her and made to dovetail by questions from the lawyer and the inspector. She was weary, but still enthusiastic, when she arose to leave.

"Miss Burnquist you have done the United States a wonderful service this day," said Inspector Saunders. "The story which you have told has enabled us to make strong the chain of evidence which we have welded about one of the most dangerous enemies within our borders. I assure you that while there probably will be no public recognition of your act, you are as deserving of a medal as the heroes who risk their lives in the face of the enemy's fire. If you believe that what you have told us may react in some way upon you at the hands of other Germans in this country, I shall be very glad to arrange for safeguards."

"I should worry about the Germans," said the girl, quickly. Her tone was flippant, but in her voice and eyes there was sincerity. "If I have done the United States a service I am glad. It is my country, too, you know, because I was born here. I came here to tell my story, inspired by a desire to get even with Jaynes for beating me out of two weeks' pay. But you can bet your bottom dollar I finished it up because I saw that it was my patriotic duty to tell all I could. And, besides, I want to do my part for the boys 'over there.' I hadn't thought much about it until now, but, my—my— sweetheart sails for France this week."

CHAPTER XV.
WHAT THE RAIDERS FOUND.

THE inspector's telephone rang as he ushered the girl out of the door.

"It's one of the operatives watching the Jaynes home," he said to Lovell, covering the transmitter with one hand. Then, speaking into the instrument, "You say the juice has given out? All right, sit tight and I'll be right over. Good bye." Turning once more to the lawyer, he added: "We're going to enter Jaynes' house now. Will you come along?"

"I wouldn't miss it for a fortune," was the quick reply. "Besides, as the legal representative of Mrs. Jaynes, I suppose it is my duty."

The inspector nodded and shortly the two were in his automobile on their way to the Jaynes home. "We tried again to get in after you telephoned us about Keller attacking his sister," explained Saunders. "But when he left—and how he got away I'd like to know—he must have left the electricity running in the wires protecting the doors and windows and we had to wait for its generating power to run down."

Once at the Jaynes home Inspector Saunders briskly took charge of things and in a trice the back door had been broken in by the shoulders of two husky operatives.

The house had been ransacked from top to bottom. Drawers were open, locks smashed, desks opened and their contents strewed over the floor. Ashes in the grate of the sitting room fireplace showed where great numbers of papers had been destroyed. Evidently, Keller, remaining behind after his employer had fled, had carried out instructions to destroy anything that might prove incriminating.

"It isn't likely that we will find anything worth while," remarked the inspector, "but I have saved until the last the one place in the house which I believe will tell us something. I refer to the basement."

He led the way down a stairway, closely followed by Lovell and the squad of operatives. But the most minute search failed to reveal anything besides the litter which may be found in the basement of any house long in use. It was the sharp eyes of an operative which put them on the right track.

"Inspector," he said, pointing to a huge trunk that stood in one corner, "do you notice anything about that trunk that is peculiar?"

Quickly Saunders strode over to stand beside it. "Yes," he replied after a moment. "It is not as dusty as the rest of the things down here. Here, two of you move this trunk."

But it did not require two of them. The first operative to seize hold of it found it moving in his grasp and the trunk swung around on a pivot at the other end, revealing a cavernous looking opening and steps leading down into the darkness. Quickly a flashlight was trained into the hole and a moment later Inspector Saunders had descended. His light played about the walls of a subcellar, dug under the basement proper, and shored up with timber as a mine is shored to prevent its roof and sides from collapsing upon the heads of the workmen. Quickly the beam of the flashlight picked out an electric switch at the foot of the steps and in a moment the cellar was flooded with light of half a dozen electric globes.

"Come on, down," called out the inspector and Lovell and the operatives followed him. Upon the dirt floor was a large assortment of coils and generators and other electric apparatus, smashed into hundreds of pieces by a ruthless hand. In one corner stood a huge storage battery.

"The mystery of the electric protection of the house is solved," said the inspector. "The wires connecting the doors and windows have been connected to this storage battery until it played out. Meanwhile Keller has been able to go about his work of destruction in perfect safety. Ah!"

He had pried open the door of a cabinet built rudely into the wall. Before the eyes of his interested spectators was an array of bottles of all sizes, descriptions and colors. Some were full, others empty, still others half full. Powders and liquids made up their contents.

"A regular laboratory," commented Lovell. "It seems our friend Jaynes was a chemist, as well as other things."

"Which lines up very well with evidence in our possession tending to connect him with various persons known to have been instrumental in blowing up docks, wharves, munition plants and factories engaged in Government work," said Inspector Saunders. "I wouldn't be surprised if enough explosives have been concocted into bombs here to blow up the whole city."

"The inhuman fiend," exclaimed Lovell. "Why, Mrs. Jaynes and her daughter have been living over a veritable volcano for no telling how long."

"Don't forget that Jaynes and Keller, for I am convinced they were hand in glove, evidently knew their business or they would not have risked their own precious lives here," replied the inspector. "Let us see what is in the bottom half," and he swung open another door.

Before them gaped the mouth of a tunnel. Investigation disclosed that it had its exit under the floor of what once had been the stables, now fallen into disuse following the advent of the motor car.

The building, too, had been used for some purpose by the men now fugitives from the long arm of the United States Government. Presenting a desolate and abandoned appearance on the outside, its inside revealed that human beings had but recently had occasion to use it. Where once the coachman had his quarters had been fitted up as a bedroom, with carpet on the floor, a stock of fresh linens and cheerful curtains, concealed from the outside by heavy shutters, whose rusty catches and hinges proved it had been many a day since they had been opened to the sunlight and air.

"An ideal hiding place for one of Jaynes' accomplices," remarked Lovell. "Perhaps some of those emissaries who came to see him thought discretion the best play and remained here in seclusion until they deemed it safe to leave the city in case they were under surveillance."

"Finding quite a lot of surprises?" broke in a voice from the doorway and

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the investigators whirled to find Judith Howe and her new sister-in-law smiling at them. "We were passing by and noticed that no one seemed to be on guard, so Marie used her doorkey and we went into the house," she continued. "And Marie thought of the safe hidden in the wall near the end of the mantel in Mrs. Jaynes' bedroom and ran upstairs and opened it and found all her mother's jewels still there. Evidently Mr. Jaynes didn't have time to get them and Keller didnt' know about the safe or hadn't been given the combination."

Marie promptly turned over the jewels to Mr. Lovell with the request that he attend to their safety until her mother and Mrs. Howe should return from their lakes trip and, well satisfied with what they had learned, the investigators nailed up the broken door of the house and departed.

"I believe it will be perfectly safe for you and your mother to return here to live," said the lawyer. "With the money which you can raise on your mother's jewels and with what you are earning as an officer of the Next of Kin Society you can keep it up nicely."

"No, thanks," said the bride, "I don't think either mother or myself would care to live here again—that is, not unless Judith and Mother Howe would come to live with us.'

"I am afraid that when Dick comes back he will be disappointed if he does not find us where he left us," said Dick's sister. "Mother and I will stay where we are and——"

"And we will stay with you," interrupted Marie. "When Dick comes back he will find us all just where he left us. Mr. Lovell can rent this house or sell it and we will all stay together. I am sure Dick would wish it so."

"And I, too," said Judith.

"Wise girls," commented Mr. Lovell.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE NICK OF TIME.

UPSET by her experience at the hands of Keller and the persecution to which she had been subjected by her pro-German neighbors, Mrs. Schenkel, following her recovery in the Lovell home, expressed a fear of returning to her little cottage and living there alone. Whereupon it very quickly was decided by Judith and Marie that she should be given a place to work in the Howe home, an offer which she accepted promptly and with every evidence of relief.

Renting of her cottage was placed in the hands of an agent and with her personal belongings she was installed in the Howe home in short order. It was there that a day or two later appeared a caller and asked for her. Judith invited him into the parlor, gave him a seat and summoned Mrs. Schenkel. Then she left the room, but not before she had noticed that the woman apparently was frightened at seeing the visitor. The latter began a conversation in German as Judith departed. She was recalled almost immediately by the sound of Mrs. Schenkel sobbing.

"What is the matter, Bertha?" she demanded, putting her arms around the woman. The man stood defiantly in the center of the room, hands thrust deep into his pockets, an unlighted cigar tilted from a corner of his mouth.

"He going to take my home," sobbed Bertha. "He said Gustav did not pay the mortgage and he must have money or he will sell the house."

"He shall not take your home," declared Judith, turning upon the caller, who now was rocking backward and forward upon his feet. "What is all this about, anyway?"

"My card, lady," said the man, tendering a piece of cardboard. "You will see that my name is Gilbert Hasse and that I am a money lender and real estate agent. This womans' son came to me about three years ago and borrowed $200 on a mortgage on their home. She signed it, as the house is hers. Then her son got $500 more. The mortgage is due and this woman says she can't pay me the $225 she still owes, so I have just told her I am going to sell the house under a deed of trust."

"I don't know anything about the law on such things, but I'll bet there is something funny going on," declared Judith. "Anyhow, I am not going to let you worry this poor woman here. Now, you will please leave, but don't think for a moment that you are going to get away with anything. I don't know the law, but you can be certain that I am going to find out. Good day!"

She held open the door suggestively and Hasse, with a sneering bow, left the room.

"Now, you get on your hat and we'll go right over and see Mr. Lovell," Judith declared. "He'll know what to do and The Next of Kin Society is intended to take care of just such cases." She hurried away to don her own street garments and within a few minutes she and Mrs. Schenkel were at the Lovell home. Happily, they found the lawyer just preparing to leave for his office and she put the case to him briefly.

Questioning of Mrs. Schenkel revealed an amazing story. During the three years the mortgage had been in effect she and her son had saved up several hundred dollars; meanwhile Gustav had told her he was paying the interest on the $200 loan regularly. But she had not been able to find the receipts and when Hasse came around to see her, shortly after her son had departed for camp, Gustav had borrowed $500 more and the mortgage and interest now amounted to $1,000 or over. She had $800 left and Hasse had frightened her into giving him that. Now he was demanding $225 more before he would cancel the mortgage. And Mrs. Schenkel was penniless.

"More than a thousand dollars!" exclaimed Lovell when he heard the loan shark's demand. "Why, even if the interest had been unpaid all this time the whole debt would be only a little more than $600, interest and all. When did you sign the second mortgage?'

"I signed a lot of papers, but I don't know about any second mortgage," declared Mrs. Schenkel. "I signed only one. He says Gustav got $500 more. I don't know anything about it. Gustav never told me."

"Isn't the house yours?"

"Sure. Gustav put it in my name when we bought it."

"He couldn't borrow any more money unless you signed a mortgage," declared the lawyer. "One person can't borrow

"The Mystery Is Solved," Said the Inspector.

money on the property of another. Come on, let's go down and see this man."

As the lawyer's automobile drew up at the address of Hasse's office the latter and a crier were standing on the steps preparing to make a sale of Mrs. Schenkel's home. About the steps was gathered the usual crowd that assembles when anything out of the ordinary is taking place. Waiting only long enough to make certain that it was Mrs. Schenkel's home that was about to be placed under the hammer, Lovell pushed his way to the front, sprang up the steps and cried:

"Wait a minute, wait a minute! This sale shall not go on."

"Who in the h—l are you?" demanded Hasse, moving menacingly toward the lawyer. "Go on with the sale," he added to the crier, "I'll take care of this bird."

"My name is Lovell, perhaps you have heard of me," said the lawyer, as the crier, torn between his anxiety to follow his orders and curiosity as to the unexpected interruption, paused irresolutely.

"Sure we know you," cried the spectators, and Hasse himself proved by his blanched face that he knew the lawyer's reputation at least, and that if he were representing Mrs. Schenkel he was no mean antagonist. The spectators, crowding closer and closer in order not to miss a word, quickly silenced the loan shark as he opened his mouth to protest again.

"Men, I take it you are all loyal American citizens," said Lovell, addressing himself to the crowd. "Sure we are," "You bet" and similar cries were his answer. "A great injustice is about to be done the mother of a soldier," continued Lovell. "This man, claiming to hold a mortgage on her home, is about to sell it. He has been paid several times the original loan and the legal rate of interest and still he wants to take from her the little home which she and her son paid for out of their savings. Unfortunately, the law which prohibits the closing down upon a soldier or sailor's property for debt does not extend to their mothers. Let me tell you the whole story."

Amid a silence that was unbroken except for occasional expressions of surprise or anger, he told them the whole story as Mrs. Schenkel had told it to him. Lovell was known to his fellow attorneys as a masterful pleader before a jury, a man who could sway them by his eloquence, and never in his best days in court had he pleaded so earnestly as he was now pleading before this street crowd.

"Now I have told you the story," he concluded. "The soldier's moratorium does not extend to the mothers of soldiers, as I told you. But there is a law written in the hearts of the people that no mother whose dependents are at the front shall be turned out of her home by money lenders while her sons are away. Who violates the written law faces the courts, where justice walks with leaden feet. Whoever violates the unwritten law in regard to that mother's moratorium will find swift justice descending upon him with flashing eyes and bared blade. I am here to wield that blade now, and I ask you that you do not permit this sale to go on until I have had an opportunity to investigate."

"Come up to my office and I will prove to you I am right," said Hasse nervously, but he glared at Mrs. Schenkel, who was standing slightly behind her protector.

"If Lovell says he's crooked I'll bet he is." broke in a voice. "Let's get this loan shark and investigate afterward."

As a match touched to tinder starts a blaze, so the words kindled to a frenzy the anger which the crowd, swayed by Lovell's eloquence, already was manifesting toward the money lender. Mutterings and cursings spread thru the ranks of spectators and speedily broke into an uproar.

"Get the loan shark!" "Kill him!" "Get a rope!" "Let's run him out of town!" Fast and loud the cries came. Men closest to Hasse seized him in no ungentle grasp and he was being roughly handled, when a policeman burst thru the fringe of spectators and took hold of one arm of the loan shark. But the men hanging onto the other arm refused to let go. To add to the uproar, Hasse was pleading loudly for his life, having become convinced that only his blood would satisfy them.

CHAPTER XVII.

JUSTICE IS TRIUMPHANT.

"STOP!"

Lovell's voice rang over the crowd and, even in their wild desire to wreak vengeance upon the oppressor of a soldier's mother, the struggling mass seemed to lose its momentum and, except for the still violent eddies around its edges, the crowd paused to listen. There are men whose voice carries magic of great will power like that. One man's words often can sway a crowd, maddened by blood-lust, to the other extreme. Thus it was with Lovell.

"Men, men," he went on—not hurriedly, but slowly, earnestly—"this is not what I asked you to do. This man's blood upon our hands would not right the wrong which he seeks to do. I ask you to have some of your number join me in making an investigation."

"I'll help you," said one man as he strode up the steps.

"Welcome," cried Lovell. "Gentlemen, this is the District Attorney, Mr. Ralph Walsh. Just the very man. Now, Mr. Hasse, if you will lead the way."

The money lender, still held firmly by the policeman, altho the spectators had released him, was a pitiable sight. His face was white as paper, his eyes depicted the terror he had just experienced and, at the mention of the District Attorney, his jaws sagged.

"Come on, you," said the policeman, and jerked the loan shark up the steps. Trembling, the wretch led the way to an elevator. The crowd surged in the wake of the principals in this little drama and, unable to jam into the elevator, took the stairway at a run, so that they quickly filled the money lender's office. Hasse slumped into a chair and huskily ordered a badly frightened woman assistant to bring the papers in the Schenkel case. His hands shook as he passed them over to Mr. Lovell. The latter and District Attorney Walsh drew chairs up to a table.

"Ah, here is the original mortgage," said Lovell, "signed and executed in due form by both Mrs. Schenkel and her son. Two hundred dollars at 6 per cent interest, the legal rate, compounded semi-annually. That is all in due form. What's this? Receipts for the interest. I thought you said he told you the interest had not been paid," turning to Mrs. Schenkel, who sat at his side.

"So he did, so he did," said the woman nervously. "Didn't you?" Hasse, still shaken to the very depths of his cowardly being, nodded.

"And the second mortgage which you claimed to hold?" demanded Lovell.

"There isn't any," said Hasse. "I lied

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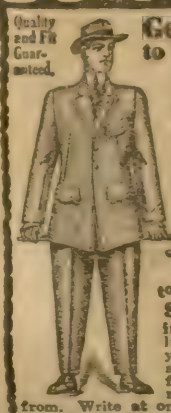

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to her. I'll give her back her money, all except my $200 and the interest. That will settle it. Give me back the papers and I'll write the check right now." He reached out to take the documents, but the District Attorney pushed his hand away.

"Not quite so fast," he said sternly. "Here is what purports to be the second mortgage, signed by both Mrs. Schenkel and her son. What is this paper?" He held it out toward the money lender, caught in the act of trying to cover up the papers. Hasse did not answer.

"A forgery, eh?" The District Attorney's voice was vibrant with anger. "You forged these signatures? Answer me. Didn't you forge these signatures on this mortgage form?" Miserably the loan shark nodded. Once more the crowd seemed on the point of breaking loose. A sullen muttering grew into a roar of anger at this evidence of double dealing.

"You are under arrest, Hasse," said the District Attorney loudly. "Officer, take this man down to my office. I shall issue the warrant immediately. You have run afoul of the written as well as the unwritten law, Hasse, and I shall go into all your dealings with the people of this city. Take him away, officer.'

"Just a minute, Mr. Walsh," broke in Lovell. "This man offered a few minutes ago to refund to Mrs. Schenkel the money of which he defrauded her. Will not the ends of justice be served equally well if he is permitted to make this restitution here and now, in the presence of all these witnesses. Criminal prosecution does not depend upon that and I should like to have loyal Americans see justice done."

"Make him dig up." "Come across, Hasse." "Give the old lady her money." The crowd showed its hearty approval of what Lovell had suggested.

The District Attorney nodded his head. "I'll write a check," said Hasse, who was in no mood to further try the temper of the avengers who crowded his offices.

"Give her the cash," roared out a voice from behind, and others took it up. "Give her the cash, give her the cash."

"I find," said Lovell, who had been busily figuring on a piece of paper, "that the original loan of $200 at 6 per cent, compounded semi-annually, would amount to $238.58. Of that amount the interest has been paid except for the last six months, leaving Mrs. Schenkel owing Hasse $206.95. He got $800 from her. He owes her $593.05. That amount in cash will be satisfactory, Mr. Hasse."

With hands that still trembled, the money lender unlocked his safe and took out a roll of bills. He carefully counted out the required amount, handed back the mortgage to Mrs. Schenkel and was in turn handed a receipt which Lovell had hurriedly drawn up and had her sign.

"This office is ordered closed," said the District Attorney, who had been using a telephone while the formality of reimbursing Mrs. Schenkel was under way. "One of my staff will be here to take charge. Officer, take your prisoner away." The crowd opened up to let the policeman and the loan shark thru. At the doorway the passage was barred by a man.

"I am the agent for this building," he announced. "We have not known until today what kind of business this man has been conducting. We would not have had him for a tenant had we known. I have heard what has gone on here and just as quick as I can write it out Hasse will receive a notice ordering him to vacate. And," he added vindictively, "I only wish I had the opportunity to kick him out literally as well as figuratively."

Her head bowed upon her arms on the table, Mrs. Schenkel was weeping softly. Tightly clenched in one hand was the money the loan shark had just paid over to her. In the other was wadded up the mortgage.

"It isn't possible," she faltered amid sobs, "I'm afraid it's all a dream."

"It is no dream," Lovell assured her. "It is only too real. Now hold up your head and show these people how you can smile."

Mrs. Schenkel's head came up proudly and thru the tears broke out a smile.

"Oh, God is good," she cried. I thank you and I thank God, and Gustav would thank you, too, if he were here."

"Three cheers for the old lady," cried out a voice, and they were given with a will.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

MRS. JAYNES and Mrs. Howe returned from their lake trip in excellent spirits. Mr. Lovell and the girls met them at the dock, and even as the girls and their mothers were exchanging kisses and embraces the keen eyes of Mrs. Howe detected that there was something beneath the surface, but she wisely refrained from asking any questions until they were at home.

Finally the excitement of the homecoming having subsided, the girls turned to the lawyer and Judith said: "All right, Mr. Lovell, you might as well tell them and have it over with." Marie moved to her mother's side and laid a protecting and comforting arm about her shoulders.

"Mrs. Jaynes, if you will pardon such a personal question, just what is the state of your feelings toward your husband now?" asked Lovell.

For a moment Mrs. Jaynes did not reply. Then she spoke slowly and clearly. "I believe that whatever affection or regard I may have once possessed for Mr. Jaynes died absolutely the day that I learned that he was not loyal to the United States," she said. "Years of ill treatment at his hands and the necessity of hiding it from all my friends and even from my little girl here as much as possible killed the feeling which I had for him at the time that he persuaded me to marry him. I realized soon afterwards that he cared nothing for me, but that what money Marie's father had left us was our principal attraction for him. It is a hard thing to say about a man with whom you have lived for many years, but I believe that if I had any feeling for him in the last few months it has been one of hate. Now, however, that he is dead——"

"Dead," echoed Mrs. Howe, but none of the others voiced any surprise, altho their faces revealed that they knew of Jaynes' death.

"Yes, dead," said Mrs. Jaynes. "I saw it in a paper which came aboard at one of our stops. I didn't want to tell you, Nancy, because it would have worried you because you would have thought I was grieving. But, really, I was surprised to find that in my heart I could not grieve for a man who had done what he had done and even pity for him could not make me forget that, if he lived, he faced a long term of prison, if not death for treason. But, I know none of the details. Now, Mr. Lovell."

"He was killed trying to cross the border into Mexico," said the lawyer. "Thru the American Protective League he was located at Rawley, just as we expected. He had been drinking heavily in one of the low dives of the town and when federal officers placed him under arrest, he drew a revolver, shot his way out of the place, mounted a horse and headed for the border. Crossing the Rio Grande River on horseback, he refused to obey commands to halt when his pursuers reached the bank and a volley was fired at him. He fell from his horse and disappeared in the water and the frightened animal turned back to the American side. In the saddlebags was several thousand dollars which Jaynes had placed there and which will be returned to you, Mrs. Jaynes, as his wife and sole heir. That is all I can tell you."

"Tell her about Keller," prompted Judith.

"Keller reached Rawley just about the time that Jaynes rode out of town," continued the lawyer. "He saw his master galloping off, stole a horse and started after him. But the animal he rode was wild, threw him off, and when he regained consciousness he was heavily shackled hand and foot. He is being brought back here to stand trial as a German spy. It is easy to foresee what his end will be."

"And, oh, mother," cried Judith, unable any longer to restrain herself, "We got a letter from Dick, and he has been chosen to attend a training camp for officers, and I'll just bet he comes out a major or a general or something."

"Hardly that, my dear," was the reply, "but we will hope that he does well in whatever place they put him. But even as a private we will feel that he is doing his bit just as much as if he were an officer."

"I just got a letter from Gustav, too," said his mother. "He is doing well and he is mighty grateful to The Next of Kin, and he is a corporal now."

The End.

* * *

Giddy Age.

"OLD SPOONABLE is too much of a dude to suit my taste," admitted Ganderson. "He must be 65 years old, and he's always togged out like a bridegroom. There he goes now. Just see his pictorial vest, and his gay and festive Panama hat, and his whole regalia. It would look all right on a young man going to see his best girl, but it isn't seemly when worn by a man who ought to compose his own epitaph and have it ready for an emergency."

"There's no sense in such a line of conversation," protested Willoughby. "I have a profound admiration for Spoonable, because he refuses to run to seed.

"That man will live to celebrate his 90th birthday unless an auto runs over him or some emissary of the Kaiser feeds him ground glass. And on that momentous occasion he'll be as young and chipper in spirit as when he cast his first vote. His attitude toward life will keep him young, and so-long as he seems young he will never be a bore.

"I have always thought it a crying shame that when the average man reaches the age of 50 he seems to consider it not worth while to go over his person with a currycomb and keep himself trim and smooth. He sags down every way, physically and mentally, and resigns himself to an easy chair and a pair of carpet slippers. He lets his whiskers grow in every direction, and quits having his clothes pressed, and prefers an old greasy hat to a new clean one.

"If you ask why he doesn't shine his shoes or sandpaper his teeth he says that such vanities are for the young. As for himself, he will be under the weeping willows in a little while, so what's the use burnishing up his old weather-beaten hulk? And, of course, he is planted shortly, and largely because he made up his mind he was going to be. If you settle down to the conviction that you are all in and have no other business than to wait for the grim reaper, you won't last long, for your mental attitude is a cordial standing invitation to said reaper.

"Whereas, if you refuse to grow old you don't grow old. The best years of a man's life are spent after his 50th birthday, if he is young in spirit and if in the days of his strength he has provided a bin of simoleons, so that he doesn't have to spend the late autumn of his career hustling in the busy marts for a living.

"Spoonable is the wisest man I know. He isn't rich, but has enough money to keep the wolf away. During his younger years he worked hard and salted down what he could, and now that he is in his second youth he is out for a good time. He likes good clothes and wears them. You never see him needing a shave or a shine. He refuses to sag down. He walks as briskly as any young fellow in town. He has his little motor car and breaks speed laws whenever possible.

"There isn't a young man in town who enjoys life as much as Spoonable, and I, for one, take off my hat to him, and regard him as a shining example to all elderly men who are inclined to let themselves get more or less run down at the heel."

* * *

His Nearest Living.

A SOUTHERNER in one of the cantonments below the Mason and Dixon line, when called up for examination, was asked:

"What is your nearest living relative?"

"What you mean, 'relative,' mister?" returned the recruit.

"Oh, I mean your nearest living kinsfolk."

"Wal, that's my aunt you're talking 'bout."

Several other questions were answered satisfactorily, when there came:

"In case of death or accident, who shall be notified?"

"My mother," immediately came from the selectman.

"But you told me just a few minutes ago that your aunt was the nearest living relative that you have," objected the officer.

"You asked me who my nearest living kin was, didn't you Wal, that's Aunt Liz—she lives jest two miles from where I been livin': mother lives five."

* * *

Wrong Line of Talk.

AMONG the guests at a reception was a distinguished man of letters. He was grave and somewhat taciturn. One of the ladies present suggested to the hostess that he seemed to be out of place at such a party.

"Yes," replied the hostess, with a bright smile, "you see, he can't talk anything but sense!"

* * *

Space Enough.

CUSTOMER—"Send up a quarter's worth of boiled ham."

"All right, sir. Anything else?"

"Yes, if my wife isn't at home tell the boy to put it thru the keyhole."

Power of Office.

"THE desire for power and position is latent in every man," said the citizen who was painting his porch swing. "And if ever a guy was saturated with it there he goes."

"I know that very well," replied the man who looked on. "Barzo really should be in some high and important office. To have him just a plain, everyday plug voter despite his lofty aspirations is very sad."

"Yep," said the man who was painting his porch swing. "But he's getting along pretty well under the system he has devised. He got busy a few nights ago framing up a committee that would take charge of whitewashing the trees on both sides of our shady avenues. He gathered a few of us up in front of the garage and took advantage of the opportunity.

"He said there was no civic pride in our community. Jones whitewashed his trees and Brown, who lives next door to Jones, didn't, and so it made the artistic eye cry out. His committee would see that Brown got busy, and also Swigger, Hardbo and all the other whitewash slackers.

"To tell you the truth, Barzo really didn't give a bowwow whether those trees were whitewashed or not. The idea behind the movement was to form the committee and have himself appointed chairman with unlimited powers.

"The unlimited powers would simply mean that Barzo in his official capacity as head of the whitewash committee could have the opportunity of making himself heard and seen. Give him the thrill of calling on the recalcitrant ones and warning them with a solemn air of authority that they were horribly remiss in their duty.

"He called here last night and my wife answered the bell. 'Is your husband in?' he asked in dramatic tones. My wife is a frail little flower, and the funereal air of Barzo almost frightened her to death. She called me from the kitchenette, where I was in the act of drying the dinner dishes.

"When I entered the living room and faced Barzo I thought from his look that something calamitous had taken place. 'Mr. Himgar,' he said, 'may I speak to you in private a moment?' Now, for twenty years Barzo had called me by my first name and his 'Mr. Himgar' startled me.

"He requested that my wife step out of the room while we would go over a matter of grave import. He drew forth a legal looking document, unrolled it, put on his glasses, drew me over to the window, where he might have better light, and began to read some complicated legal sounding stuff, the import of which I didn't catch at all.

"At last he got to the last line that mentioned two moth eaten poplars, situated so many feet from the building line on lot such and such street, in subdivision what's its name, in the township of something or other, which should be treated with a solution of lime and water to conform with the I don't know what.

"Well, sir, it was one of those moments in which one feels like tapping the party of the second part on the cranium with a mallet, as they do in the movies. But I stifled my comedy instinct when I realized that poor Barzo was making believe he was an official of great importance and I appended my name to his documents with an affidavit that I would whitewash my trees on or before a certain date."

* * *

It Would Be Too Short.

THE woman at the back door: "It must be a terrible thing to have to go thru life without your limb. You must remember, however, that it will be restored to you in the next world."

The Hobo: "I know it will, mum, but that don't encourage me none. You see, me foot was cut off when I was a baby, and it won't come within a foot of the ground when it's restored."—Puck.

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Others—men and women—have reported remarkable hair growth by the same method. Whoever wishes the recipe may obtain it free by writing to John H. Brittain, BC-178, Station F, New York, N. Y. This is a genuine hair growing offer and will prove to be just what you have been seeking.

"HUSH!"

By Victor Redcliffe

(Copyright.)

"WHO is she?"

"Miss Barnabetta Burgoyne."

"She is the most beautiful woman I have ever seen," pronounced Wayne Blatchford, only a humdrum law clerk, but artistic, temperamentally poetic, and, therefore, susceptible to strong impressions.

He had paused in a casual stroll thru the little inland city of Waltham to observe the occupant of a modest but expensive automobile. The car was standing at the curb, its chauffeur evidently having been sent on some mission to one of the stores, on this, the principal street of the town. A young lady sat in a somewhat rigid pose, her face statuesque in its classic beauty. What struck Mr. Blatchford was that, while to ordinary eyes, this superb figure would have suggested the cold hauteur of an aristocrat, seeking the depths of her eyes, he noted a hidden trace of sadness, subtle, ineffable.

More than that, he discovered that while humble passersby bowed to her with infinite respect those in passing automobiles of higher social prestige either greeted her not at all or with a scant civility, and the lips of the peerless creature fluttered tremulously at the fact, as tho she felt deeply the contempt of obloquy, expressed.

"Williston—Ah! A Clew, a Vital Suggestion."

Then the chauffeur returned and the automobile sped away, leaving Mr. Blatchford like one in a passing trance. He aroused himself with an effort.

"Burgoyne?" he repeated vaguely. "Where have I heard that name before? Ah! I fancy an old historical reminiscence."

Wayne Blatchford did not meet the young lady again during the next two days, but he did not forget her. Then his interest in her was revived by a strange circumstance. He was strolling thru the beautiful cemetery at the edge of the city one afternoon, when he observed a high, massive shaft bearing the name "Burgoyne." Again it suggested something he had forgotten, but the similitude once more escaped him.

The imposing shaft bore a lengthy legend. It detailed the services to his country and to his city of William Burgoyne, ranking brigadier in the Army and Mayor of Waltham. It expanded on his integrity and public and private charities.

Then, aroused to sheer amazement, Blatchford traced a brief and obscure legend upon a low, flat slab of marble placed at the remote edge of the same burial lot, for it read, "Williston, son of William Burgoyne—Hush!"

He thrilled, and he knew not why. The uncanny sensation that overcame him was past analysis. Why the half-hidden tablet in the shadow of the towering shaft? Why—"hush"? It was a warning, an appeal, a pitiful call for human charity. Why?

Involuntarily, Wayne Blatchford removed his hat and stood with head bowed. His impressive nature responded to this fairly emotional presentment. The stone hid—what?—a secret?—a mystery?—a direful taint? And what might it not have to do with the bereaved daughter of Williston Burgoyne!

Williston—ah! a clew, a vital suggestion. The names in conjunction stirred up memory to a new effort. Now he knew where he had seen that name before. His thoughts went groping to rest upon a clear central fact. Then a rustling sound in the grass behind him caused him to turn quickly, and he could not restrain a quick gasp, for, viewing him wonderingly, was Miss Barnabetta Burgoyne.

In the near distance was her automobile, in her hands she bore some flowers. Evidently her mission was to do homage to the dead. Blatchford drew aside almost guiltily, as tho he were committing a desecration, for fear she might construe his presence here into callous seeking into the mystery of the secret that hallowed grave might conceal.

A fine bitter scorn came into that lovely face he had not believed it capable of expressing, as he said simply, "Pardon me," and started respectfully to move on."

"Oh, I understand!" she said, "they even enlighten strangers as to the wretched calumny that killed my poor father."

"You mistake," spoke Blatchford speedily. "It was reverence, it was sympathy, it was a solemn pity at the presence of that strange word—'hush'!"

She fixed a look upon him as if intent upon reading his very soul. Then her eyes softened. She turned her face away. He caught the faint echo of a sob.

"If I dared to believe that I could be of service to you!" he was constrained to speak, "not to intrude on your sorrow, only to lighten your burden, if that were possible. Believe me, all I see, all I surmise, appeals to the depths of my very soul."

Again those translucent eyes fixed his own. She put out her hand. She did not release it until she had led him to a rustic bench at the edge of the pathway.

"'Hush'!" she said. "Do you understand what that means? Go ask any gossip of the town, look back in the public prints a year ago, learn all the tragic story as others tell it. Then, if your soul does not shrink from the hideous presentment, come to me, as friend, as counselor of a broken-hearted woman with but one thought in life—to clear the memory of a noble father unjustly accused, driven to his death by the uncharitableness of a cruel persecution."

It was a strange soul communion. He welcomed it, he cherished it. And all the time his mind was repeating that name, "Williston Burgoyne." The single name had simply awakened his memory, the two together—it all came back to him now! He did not tell his impassioned companion what was in his mind. He listened to her story and a new flood of light resulted.

She told of her father, rich, honored, respected, accused by a business rival who hated him, of faithlessenss in the sacred trust of a widow and orphan. Long since the just division of an estate had been concluded. When Mr. Burgoyne went to get the papers proving every step he had taken in the trust, they were gone.

"The house had been burglarized a month before," narrated Miss Burgoyne. "Whoever took jewelry and money also carried away a portfolio containing those papers. The wicked, relentless persecutor saw his power and urged it cruelly. Our claims were treated as fiction, my father was disgraced. The blow killed him. The thief probably threw the papers away, for I have advertised a large reward for their return."

An appeal for help, for sympathy, for interest was in those beautiful eyes. Blatchford arose, a great purpose in his mind.

"Dear lady," he said, and his strong voice trembled, "your pitiful story has opened a sealed chamber in my mind. I may have great news for you within the next forty-eight hours."

He had, for this had happened! Nearly a year before his law firm had closed up the affairs of a notorious criminal and his wife had brought all of his papers to the office. Distinctly now Blatchford recalled a package of documents bearing the name "Williston Burgoyne." Back he sped to the city. On a dusty shelf of the vault of the office Blatchford found them, where they had been cast aside as having no bearing on the estate of the criminal's widow.

But to Barnabetta Burgoyne they were everything, for they were the documents that proved her father an innocent man!

It was the glory of her life, the rehabilitation of that beloved parent's memory. It was Blatchford who stanchly assisted her in the task.

In the glow of a beautiful summer evening those two, with joined hands and joined hearts, saw removed by the carver's chisel from the little obscure tombstone, that searing, sinister word, "Hush!"

* * *

When a miser marries he picks out a woman who looks nice in her old clothes.

Something Big for the General.

THE recruit was having his first turn on sentry duty. "Now, remember your salutes," the corporal warned him. "If you see a lieutenant wearing one star, slope arms. For a captain with three stars, slope arms also. The major has a crown on his cap and you present arms. For the colonel, who has stars and a crown, you present arms, and then turn out the guard." When he was left alone the recruit went over the orders again and again. Suddenly his musing was interrupted by the approach of an officer. This was a general, and the recruit did not know what to do for him. "And what might you be?" he asked bluntly, unable to recognize the badge of the officer's rank. "I'm the general," replied the officer, affably. "Sure now, and are ye?" exclaimed the recruit in consternation. "Then ye'll want something big. How'd it do if I gave ye a bayonet exercise?"

* * *

She Pinched 'Em.

TO A HOSPITAL for wounded soldiers the queen of England recently sent an exceptionally beautiful bouquet that had been presented to her. The inmates received the gift with much pleasure, says an English periodical, and to show their appreciation of her majesty's kindness and to prove that the flowers had arrived safely they commissioned one of their number to stand at the hospital gate the following morning when the Queen passed. The result was a tremendous surprise. Queen Mary, seated in her car, saw the soldier standing at the gate, bouquet in hand, and, assuming that he wished to present it to her, she had the car stopped. As the soldier exhibited the bouquet the Queen took it in her hand, remarked upon its beauty, calmly appropriated it and gave word for the car to go on. The soldier stared in amazement. Then, recovering his speech, he said: "Well, she's pinched 'em!"

* * *

He Had Everything Else.

AN OFFICER lately returned from Alexandria brings a story of the British soldier's humor. A certain curio hunting captain had prevailed upon two privates to move his effects. They managed everything save a weighty packing case, which defied their united efforts. As they paused to wipe the sweat from their brows one asked:

"What the deuce is in it, Bill?"

"T' pyramids," answered Bill promptly.

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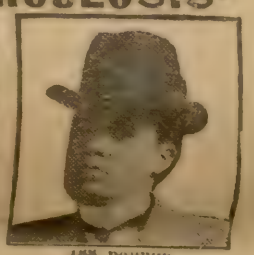

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LETTERS FROM JIM

DEAR FRIEND MISS BROWN: I guess maybe you won't remember what you said to me about writing to you that night before I left for camp when I walked from Flossy's, but please try and remember and don't just think I'm a fresh gink for writing.

Well, this is some country down here and we had some trip down and I wished you could see how pretty it is. There's an awful lot of flowers and the folks down here seem to think us boys is all right from the way they treat us. Most of the time I don't get homesick or anything, only sometimes I think of the good time we had over to Flossy's that night and wished I could be there again. I hope you won't get sore at me for writing to you and that you'd answer this letter if you have a few minutes to spare. Yours truly,

JAMES M'MAHON.

—

DEAR FRIEND MISS BROWN: I guess maybe you don't know how good it feels for a fellow to get a letter from a young lady like you when he's such a long way from his home town, or you wouldn't have said what you did about me just kidding you along when I said how glad I'd be to get a letter from you. I was some glad and that's no kid, and I think your handwriting is grand and I'd be happy if I could write half as good.

We certainly are having one grand time down here. There's a fellow in our company that I chum with a bit and he's a Southern fellow and has some friends in this town, so when we can get leave together they invite us out there and we sure have a classy time. One of the girls out there is awful pretty. She makes me think of some kind of a flower, a magnolia, I guess it is. I don't know as you ever saw a magnolia. I wished I could send you one, but they're awful hard to send. They turn brown every time you touch them. Your friend,

JIM M'MAHON.

—

DEAR GRACE: Say, was I pretty near tickled to pieces to get your letter. I thank you for telling me I can call you by your first name and I sure wanted to all along, but I didn't dare for fear you'd think I was a fresh gink. I think it was grand of you to answer so soon and your letters can't ever come any too thick to suit me. Yes, my chum and me was out to those friends of his a couple of nights ago and we had a swell time and all, but not any sweller than what we had over to Flossy's that night. I certainly wished you could see this country down here. It's grand. I guess I'll have to quit now and I certainly hope you'll answer real soon. Yours truly,

JIM M'MAHON.

—

DEAR GRACE: You see I'm not losing any time answering your letter. I don't know why I didn't say any more than I did about those young ladies where my chum and me go. I guess I couldn't think of anything else was the reason. There's a couple of those girls and one of them has pink cheeks and one hasn't. I guess that's why I said she made me think of a magnolia blossom, because her cheeks look kind of soft and white and like those flowers. I guess that's all I can think of to tell you about them.

This is a great life and I wouldn't change places with anybody in the world, but I would like to have one evening like that one we had at Flossy's when I walked home with you before we go over to knock the Kaiser's block off.

Hoping to hear from you soon. Yours,

JIM.

—

DEAR GRACE: I sure was glad to get your letter and there's nobody in the world that I would rather have write to me, but I laid awake all night pretty near wondering what I could have said to have offended you when there's nobody in the world I wouldn't rather hurt the feelings of than you. Honest, I don't remember what I said about those Southern young ladies, but no matter what I said I want to say right here that you've got 'em beat a hundred and fifty ways and that's not knocking those young ladies either, for they're awful nice girls.

All I'm bothering about is what you said about not writing to me any more. If you don't, I guess, if I don't get killed, I'll stay over here after the war's over and help fix up France and the other countries. They'll need a bunch of fellows to work to help them and I guess that's what I'll do.

But I wish you'd write and tell me what I did to hurt your feelings, for I may as well tell you that I don't care what any other girl in the world thinks of me, but just you and that's how I've felt ever since I first met you, and it's up to you to say you'll marry me when I come back or otherwise I won't come. And so no more at present. Lovingly,

JIM.

DARLING GRACE: I haven't got but a minute before I got to turn in, but I'm just crazy with happiness so I got to write you a few lines. I've just wrote to my dad to take the little piece of money I've got in the bank and for him and ma to go and buy you the prettiest ring they can find. My folks don't need the money and they'd be the first ones to want you to have it, so please don't think you hadn't ought to take it.

These few lines is all I have time to write and I'm an awful poor letter writer anyway, but I guess there ain't a fellow in this camp or any other one that's any happier than what I am, and the truth is I'm just as happy as I can be and I feel I could lick the whole German army just because the prettiest and the best little girl in the world's going to be waiting for me when I come back. And so no more at present. Yours,

JIM.

* * *

Making Headway.

"YOU must come out and see our bungalow," suggested the sweet faced woman as she trumped her partner's ace. "It is awfully pretty, with hardwood floors——"

"And a paper roof," added the sweet-faced woman's husband.

"It has just been freshly tinted," continued the sweet faced woman.

"And it took the painters a year to get around to it," added the sweet faced woman's husband, "and they're not done yet, for the front door is still to be varnished."

"The man is coming to do that tomorrow," said the sweet faced woman. "He came yesterday, but the varnish wasn't there, and the varnish arrived today, but the painter wasn't there."

"The painter never seems to bring his paint with him any more," vouchsafed the sweet faced woman's husband. "The paint is the last thing to arrive. Some things—for instance, ladders—often arrive ahead of the painter, but the paint never does. Then send the ladders to jolly us along."

"Just as I set the table in a hurry when I see my husband coming," said the sweet faced woman. "A table with dishes on it is sure to create the impression that dinner will be ready soon, and will keep a husband quiet and patient for hours. It is the same idea the painters have in sending out ladders."

"But they don't fool me any," declared the husband. "I never believe there is going to be any painting done until I see the color of the paint, and you can't believe it then, because the paint often gives out before the job is done."

"Too true," assented the sweet faced woman as she again took the lead away from her partner. "How it made my heart sink when I heard the news! It was the brigand who was painting the kitchen who announced it to the nihilist who was painting the front door.

"'Say,' we ain't got enough paint for this kitchen!' he said. Then they both quit work while they took stock of the different cans they had. After a while I heard both men out on the front porch——"

"Painting the door," explained the husband.

"No, only one of them was painting the door. The other was merely looking on, sitting in a porch rocker and rocking himself luxuriously while chatting with the door painter."

"If they would keep their ladders and their painters, and just send us enough paint we could make out all right," persisted the sweet faced woman's husband, "by using our own neighbors' ladders and doing our own painting."

"Yes, if they would send us enough," said the sweet faced woman.

"A-hem!" said the man who had been a silent partner to the sweet faced woman. "If you haven't enough paint you can always add a little turpentine. We painters often do that," he explained.

* * *

When a man and his wife get along nicely together all the women of the neighborhood think it's because the wife is boss.

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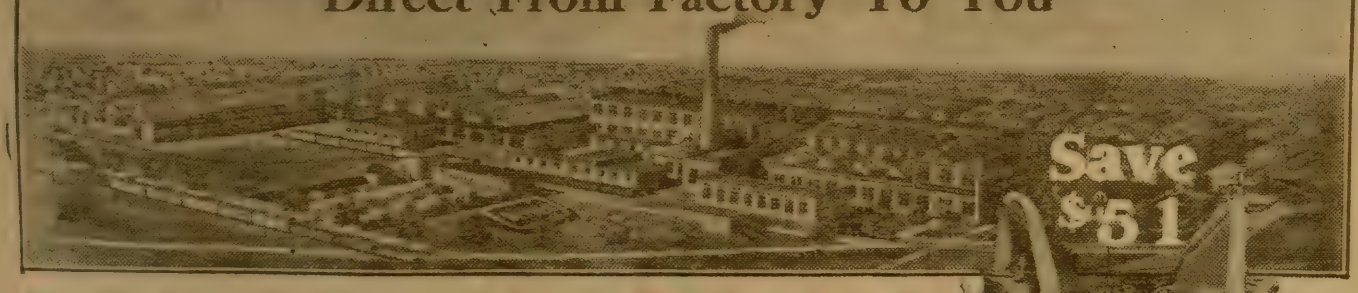

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Listen to this! We ship direct from our big factory, devoted exclusively to the manufacture and direct distribution of this wonderful Oliver. Don't send a dollar—no, not one penny. Merely send us the coupon and we ship you immediately a brand new latest model Oliver Nine. Try it for five days as if it were your own.

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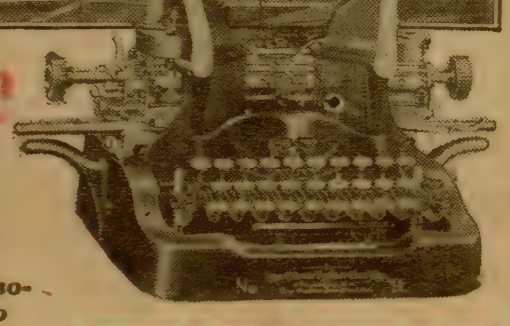

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THE OLIVER TYPEWRITER COMPANY
1226 Oliver Typewriter Building, Chicago, Ill.

☐ Ship me a new Oliver Nine for five days' free inspection. If I keep it, I will pay $49 at the rate of $3 per month. The title to remain in you until fully paid for.

My shipping point is .....
This does not place me under any obligation to buy. If I choose to return the Oliver, I will ship it back at your expense at the end of five days.

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Don't Wait

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In sending, send strip of paper fitting around second joint of finger. If satisfied upon arrival send $3.50—then $3 monthly until the price, $12.50, is paid for either one. Otherwise return the ring within ten days and we will refund any payment made. This offer is limited. Send while it holds good.

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He Couldn't Tease.

NEARLY all the children in Mother Goose Village went to Good Dame Trot's little school. Big Jack Strout always rang the bell at 9 o'clock and the children came running across the village green and up the lane so they wouldn't be late.

Kitty Fisher lived near the schoolhouse. One morning her mother said: "Your hair is getting so nice and thick, Kitty Fisher, I think I will not bob it any more. I'll fix it in two braids and then it will stay nicely all day."

"Oh, mother! I'd like to have the braids, but what will the boys and girls at school say! I'm sure Georgie Porgie will pull my braids. You know he always teases the girls, anyway."

Mother Fisher gave the funny little braids a last twist, patting them so they would hang straight, but for all that they stuck straight out from the back of Kitty Fisher's little head. They simply wouldn't hang down as they should.

"They'll not stand out after a while," said Mother Fisher.

"Well, if Georgie Porgie pulls your braids and teases you just turn around and nod and smile at him, as much as to say, 'Yes, Georgie Porgie, I know my stiff little braids are funny, so just have all the fun you can out of them.'"

Kitty Fisher started off to school rather slowly. She didn't run across the green as usual, for she wasn't at all sure she could be good-natured about it. It was all very easy for mother to say, but did she know how hard it would be? Anyway, Kitty Fisher was sure of one thing, Georgie Porgie had never sat behind mother at school.

Tho she walked so slowly the schoolhouse came in view long before she wished. It stood in the old place just at the bend of the road. Kitty Fisher wished it was a mile farther, for she didn't want to see Georgie Porgie or Cross Patch or Lucy Locket. As it was she just missed being late. Big Jack Strout was ringing the bell when she came into the yard.

She pulled her hat down on her head as she took her place in the line, but of course she couldn't keep it on in school. It had to come off and be left hanging with the others in the cloakroom.

When she passed Dame Trot's desk that dear little old lady patted the little braids and smiled, but the first thing she heard when she sat down in her chair was a smothered laugh from Georgie Porgie behind her. Then came a little pull and a whisper—"Pigtails! Pigtails! Pigtails!"

"Oh, dear!" thought Kitty Fisher, "I can't smile at him, as mother said." Just then there was another pull at the little braid and Georgie Porgie's whisper—"Pigtails! Pigtails!"

Kitty Fisher decided she would—yes—she would. The smile that Georgie Porgie saw on her face a moment later surprised him so much that he stared at her with wide-open eyes. Then she gave him a merry little nod that seemed to say, "They are funny, Georgie Porgie, but have all the fun out of them now because they are growing fast!"

Georgie Porgie had to think it all over and he must have thought there was no use in teasing a girl with a merry smile like that, for he began to study his spelling lesson, and Kitty Fisher heard no more from him.

At recess Tom-Tom, The Piper's Son, came over to Georgie Porgie and said: "Come on, Georgie Porgie. Let's have some fun with Kitty Fisher. Look at her pigtails!"

Georgie Porgie frowned. "I don't see anything the matter with Kitty Fisher's hair," he said.

"See Kitty Fisher's pigtails!" called Little Johnny Green. "Come on and have some fun."

"Johnny Green, you let Kitty Fisher alone! You'll get fooled if you try to tease her!" Just then Georgie Porgie heard Cross Patch and some of the girls calling, "Pigtails! Pigtails! Pigtails!" and he called back, "Why can't Kitty Fisher wear her hair the way she wants to? You can't tease her. Look at her smile!"

So Kitty Fisher heard no more about pigtails.

"What about Georgie Porgie?" asked Mother Fisher that evening.

"Why, mother! Georgie Porgie is a real nice boy!"

* * *

At the Risk of His Life.

STRANGE things happen over on the battlefields of France. For instance, listen to this story, told around a camp fire "over there" by a British colonel:

"When we came out we had a regimental clerk named Tommy Brown," the Colonel said, "and he was at once the worst soldier and the most popular man about headquarters. He was a little, round chap, with a round face and round eyes, and usually forgot to salute, and he never had all his pockets buttoned at once. He wrote a round, clear hand, and all the loops of his letters, o's and a's and d's and such like, were made with perfect circles. He did his own work and then cheerfully turned to and did anybody else's that he could. He would drive an ammunition cart half the night and bear stretcher the other half, work at his own job thru the morning, and at mess time play for hours on a harmonica in a way to drive the old man crazy.

"Well, we were pretty well beaten to pieces below Ypres in the summer of 1915, and Tommy was knocked out and rated as missing. Some said he was killed, others thought he was captured, but we never saw him again. We used to talk of him on gloomy nights, just to cheer ourselves up, then, gradually, we forgot him.

"Last winter I was walking thru our lines on a particularly atrocious night, when Fritz got peeved about something, and the Major and I and three or four others got into the Major's dugout to wait until it was over. Fritz was shelling the whole back line, and it was pretty fair rocking. You can, in a way, watch the working of the German mind in one of these outbursts of hate, and it seemed to me that he was searching for a headquarters dugout.

"Our door was blown in once, but nothing nearer happened, until just as he was about to cease firing, he got a direct hit on our dugout. The shell smashed thru the flimsy concrete and imbedded itself in the floor, but it did not explode.

"'Thank God, it's a dud,' everybody said, but a gas officer yelled 'Gas!' and slammed on his mask. We all did likewise and he hurriedly dug out the shell and dumped it into a gas-tight bag. Fritz had been throwing a good many liquid gas shells—the kind that empties out the liquid from the rent in the nose of the shell, leaving the liquid on the ground to produce gas for hours.

"The gas officer bore the shell away with him, and as the strafe ceased we went back to my headquarters. About an hour later as the Adjutant and I were having a drop of hot rum before turning in, somebody came barging thru my sentries, and burst into my quarters. It was the gas officer, and I thought he was blotto. He did cut a bit too deeply into the whisky at times. But when he refused a drink, I knew he was sober.

"'Tommy Brown did it,' he said, hysterically and half-weeping.

"We tried to sooth him and untangle his mind.

"'That was not a gas shell,' he went on. 'I took it back and opened it up It was high explosive, or should have been, but the explosive was harmless Somebody had pulled the teeth of that thing before ever it left the shop. And I know who it was, too. It was a prisoner working in a German munition factory, a chap who is carrying on, well knowing that he will be shot the minute he is detected. In that shell, where the fuse should have been, was this scrap of paper:

"He spread out the paper, and there, in Tommy Brown's fat, round characters, were the words: 'I am doing my bit.'

"Of course, Tommy could never have known where we were, and he could never have known, out of the millions the Hun was sending across, where the shells he worked on himself would fall, but we knew that night, luck, fate, chance, the long arm of coincidence or what not, told us, that our liason was unbroken and that the old regiment was carrying on."

* * *

Evidence Made No Difference to Him.

A JUROR was about to be sworn in when the judge bethought himself to say: "I trust, sir, that you fully understand the duties and responsibilities of a juror?" Whereupon the man drew himself up and answered: "Your honor, I am a plain man and believe in being fair to all. I don't go by what the lawyers say and I don't go by what the judge says, but I look carefully at the defendant in the dock and I say to myself: 'That fellow must have done something or he wouldn't be here.' So I bring 'em all in guilty."

* * *

Help Win the War.

POLICE PROSECUTOR STANTON reports a friend heard a sound like that of a grinder as he entered a restaurant in Milwaukee.

Nearly every one in the restaurant had his spoon in his cup of coffee and was stirring hard.

"Help win the war," read a sign on the wall. "Use only one spoonful of sugar, and stir hard. We don't mind the noise."

Holding Up the Nation's Defense

The telephone played a tremendous part in this Nation's mobilization for war. It continues vital to the Government's program.

At the same time it has remained at the service of the whole people whose demands upon it grow apace with that of the Government.

The public is entitled to the best service that it is possible to render. But the public has a partnership in the responsibility for good telephone service.

It takes three to make any telephone connection: the person calling, the company, and the person called. Without the cooperation of all three the service suffers.

The telephone company can make the connection, but no words can be heard at one end of the line which are not properly spoken into the transmitter at the other. The relation between the speaker and the hearer is the same as the relation between the orator and his audience. It cannot be maintained if the orator turns his back to the listeners or if the audience is inattentive.

Telephone traffic must be kept moving. Speak distinctly—answer promptly—and release the line as quickly as possible. Don't continue reading when the bell rings.

These seem little things to ask the individual telephone subscriber, but when the individual is multiplied by millions all over this country, it is easy to see how important it is that *all* should cooperate.

AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES
One Policy *One System* *Universal Service*

For the Woman Who Sews or Embroiders

Knitted Bedroom Slippers.

USE either Scotch knitting yarn or fourfold Germantown in two shades and No. 14 steel needles. With darker yarn cast on 17 stitches and knit plain for 5 rows.

Sixth Row—Knit 3 stitches with dark yarn, now with light yarn insert needle in 4th stitch, * wrap the light yarn around needle and forefinger of left hand 3 times and work this off as a stitch, then a plain stitch with dark yarn.

Repeat from * to end of row, ending with 3 plain, stitch with the dark yarn.

Seventh, Ninth and Eleventh Rows—Knit plain with dark yarn, knitting every stitch.

Eighth and Tenth Rows—With dark yarn increase in center in this way: Knit to within 3 stitches of center, insert needle in front of stitch, make a stitch, then make a stitch in back of same stitch. Knit 1, now slip the stitch off the needle; this gives an increase of 1 stitch, then knit the middle or center stitches, increase again in the next stitch.

Repeat from sixth to eleventh rows (until there are 12 stripes of light and 13 dark stripes) for the vamp, then knit 27 stitches, bind off intervening stitches in center, knit 27 stitches. Slip 27 stitches on safety pin and knit on remaining 27 stitches without increasing until there are 12 stripes of light and 12 stripes of dark. Slip stitches from safety pin and knit this side to correspond with the first side. Bind off and join on the wrong side.

Finish the top of the slipper with double crochet for running in ribbons and then top with a scallop or knit a band which can be sewed on and turned over.

To make a turn over: Use either the lighter shade or white as preferred.

Cast on 22 stitches. Knit 80 ribs or 160 rows, bind off, crochet around top of slipper, making 1 d c, ch 2 and repeat, sew strip onto it.

Finish with a twisted cord and tassels of wool or ribbons.

Summer Breakfast Set.

NATURAL crash toweling of rather coarse weave makes an attractive table set.

A square can be used for the center of varying size to fit the table and four or more individual mats or doilies about 12 by 16 inches in size.

Draw and cut each piece by a thread, then a quarter inch from edge draw out another thread or two. Crochet all along each piece of crash, working into the space, with a mercerized perle cotton and suitable hook. Single crochet for about one inch space then make a picot, wood green, golden brown or old blue make a very pretty edge.

In one corner of each piece add a monogram or initial as preferred in small cross-stitch design.

About Fringe.

FRINGE, fringe, fringe, we see it everywhere. It is still a good trimming, but it needs clever manipulation, and when well placed is surely one of the most effective means of trimming our frocks, hats, parasols and coats. And it is used on all these things—on others, too, for we carry fringed handbags and even wear fringed underwear and negligees.

Renovates Silk Embroidery.

SILK embroidery may be cleaned with a camel-hair brush dipped in spirits of wine and rubbed over the embroidery. The brush should be frequently rinsed in an extra container of spirit to remove the dirt. The embroidery need not be removed from the garment it trims.

Instead of Darning.

WHEN a thread breaks in a stocking and causes a long run, sew it on the machine just as an ordinary seam. It is more satisfactory than darning.

Trimming Pillow Slips.

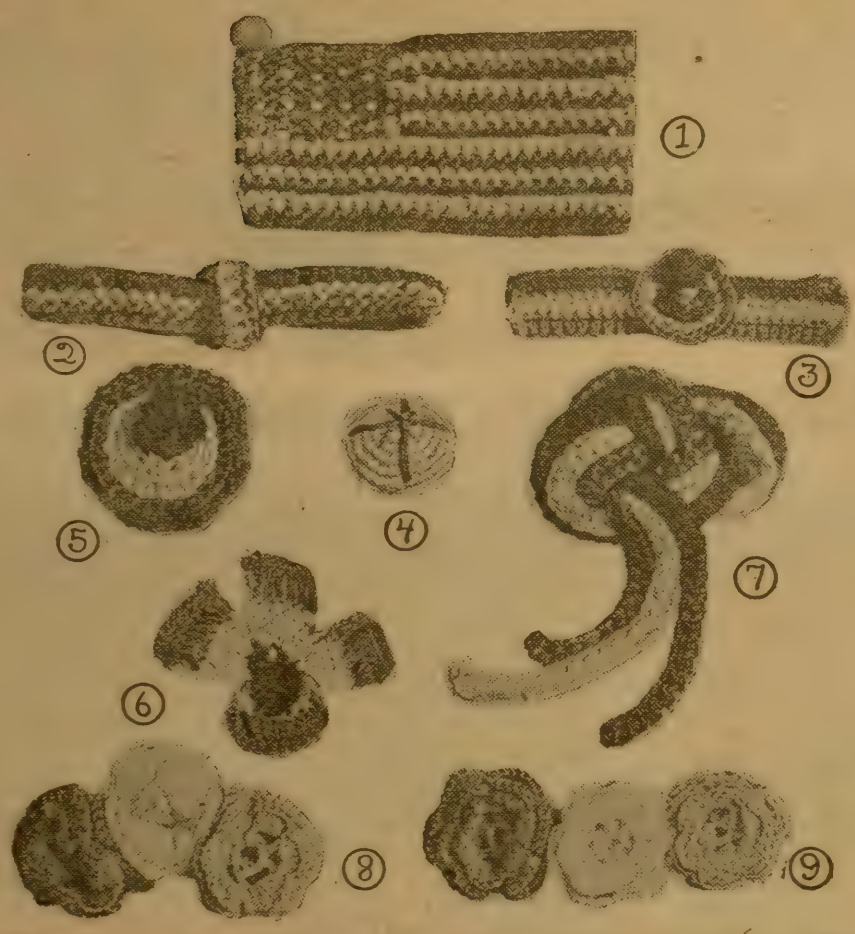
PILLOW SLIPS, towels, etc., may be trimmed by scalloping the ends. Then double crochet over the narrow hem finishing the scallop. Any trimming may then be added.

HIS HEARING RESTORED

The invisible antiseptic ear drum invented by Mr. A. O. Leonard, which is in reality a miniature megaphone, fitting inside the ear and entirely out of sight, is restoring the hearing of literally hundreds of people in New York City. Mr. Leonard invented this remarkable drum to relieve himself of deafness and head noises, and it does this so successfully that no one could tell that he is a deaf man. A request for information addressed to A. O. Leonard, Suite 116, 70 Fifth Av., New York City, will be given a prompt reply.—Advt.

Crocheted Patriotic Novelties

BY ELIZABETH BERNE



THE call of our country to arms arouses within us all the patriotism which is so natural that in peace times we are scarcely conscious of its existence, but in a crisis like the present every man, woman and child in this broad land is anxious to show the fiber of which he or she is made.

The crochet worker can make many unique and original emblems of the beautiful combination of our national colors, in a short time and at little cost. One ball each of red, white and blue mercerized crochet cotton or knitting silk will make more emblems than are illustrated on this page.

Beginning with out flag, of silk, this is 2 inches long. Start with the blue, make 11 ch sts. First Row—1 s c into the 2d ch st, 1 s c into each of the remaining sts, 1 ch st, turn, continue for 7 rows, break thread. Fasten the red, make 20 ch sts, turn, skip 1 ch st, 1 s c into each st, sl st to blue, drop thread; fasten white, make 1 s c into each st of the red, drop thread; take up the red again, join to the next row of blue and continue, alternating the stripes for the 7 rows, 4 of red and 3 of white, break both threads. Start the white at the lower edge of blue and make 3 stripes each of white and red alternately across the entire width. Thread a needle with the white and make small sts on the blue to represent the stars. This can be worn on a long pin or appliqued to decorate many pieces of wearing apparel. One very popular use is to applique it to the pocket of a white middy blouse; another, to the large collar of waist or dress, on one cuff, on a wide belt, cash or skirt pocket, etc.

No. 2—The bow knot of red, white and blue can be made any size desired; make a ch of the red, then one row of s c, then one row each of the other colors, sew a band across the center and attach a long pin to the back for a boy's coat lapel or a small safety pin for a girl's coat or waist.

No. 3—This emblem is made in three parts. For the flat band make a single row of each color. For the center use a large headed pin; of the red make 3 ch sts. First Row—5 s c into center st, join. Second Row—* 2 s c into first st, 1 s c into next st, repeat *. Third Row—1 sc into each st; if this is too large for the head of the pin, pad with cotton and close. For the flat portion of the red make 5 ch sts, join. First Row—1 s c into each st and continue as before for the next 2 rows, then fasten white, make * 1 s c into each of the first 2 sts, 2 s c into next st, repeat *, break thread. Join the blue, make * 1 s c into each of the first 3 sts, 2 s c into the next st, repeat *. Sew the three parts together with needle and thread.

No. 4—Patriotic buttons: Half a dozen of these will make a very attractive gift to be used for the front of one's waist. They can be made any size. They are started same as for No. 3 emblem and mounted over a wooden mold; after turning over the edge of the mold and before closing tight, with needle and thread make the long cross lines of red and the short ones of blue; then close.

No. 5—Emblem pin: Is made same as No. 3 emblem, only larger, padding the pin head and making 2 rows of each color instead of one, omitting the band.

No. 6—Patriotic flower: The center pin is covered in red same as above; of the red make 5 ch sts, join. First Row—16 d c, join, fasten the white thread; make 3 ch sts, 7 d c into 4 d c of the red, 1 ch st, turn; 1 s c into each st, sl st back to the red, repeat * three times, break thread. Join the blue, 3 ch sts, 1 d c into each st, 1 ch st, turn, 1 s c into each st, break thread. Repeat for each petal.

No. 7—Make a ch 9 inches long, turn, 1 s c into each st, break thread. Make the same of each color, fasten one end of each color together and tie into a loose double knot, sew into place and fasten to a long pin.

Nos. 8 and 9—For the Irish crochet roses: Start with 6 ch sts, join into a circle. First Row—5 ch sts, * 1 d c, 2 ch sts, repeat * for 6 sp; join. Second Row—* 1 s c, 5 d c over sp, repeat * for 6 petals. Third Row—* 1 s c back of s c, 5 ch sts, repeat * for 6 loops. Fourth Row—* 1 s c, 7 d c, repeat * for 6 petals. Fifth Row—* 1 s c, 7 ch sts, repeat * for 6 loops. Sixth Row—* 1 s c, 9 d c, repeat * for 6 petals, break thread. Repeat for one rose of each color, sew together and mount on long or safety pin.

Hemstitching Curtains.

DRAW the threads as usual, then turn and baste the hem in the center of the drawn space; lengthen the stitch of the machine and stitch along the edge of hem; then grasp the elge of hem in one hand and hold the curtain with the other as you pull the hem down to the outer edge of the drawn space. You will find a finish that can hardly be told from hand work.

About Buttons.

WHEN trimming suits, dresses and other garments with cloth-covered buttons or buttons with a self-shank, pin them on with the smallest size of safety pin on the under side of the garment. This is more quickly done, holds more firmly, and the buttons can be easily removed when laundering or pressing is to be done.

Economizing Effort.

WHEN several handkerchiefs are to be made select your material and cut in strips of the desired width, following a thread. Both edges of the strip should be finished before cutting into squares, either by running thru the hemmer or using an embroidery attachment with colored thread for making the narrow colored edge so popular.

Pockets Still With Us.

POCKETS are another trimming feature that remain in good style, tho they are no novelty. Real or seeming pockets, faced or lined with white or colored satin, are used smartly on some of the new models of navy blue serge.

Wall Paper Portieres.

HERE are directions for making the paper beads, which are afterwards strung together with glass beads. Cut a pattern from pasteboard, triangular in shape 3 inches wide and 6½ inches long. Place this pattern on your paper and outline with a pencil. Then cut to shape. Roll on a large firm hat pin beginning at the three-inch side, when almost rolled put a bit of glue on the end, roll up, press into place and hold between the fingers until fast.

It is best to have a box of beads handy, then select those which blend in color and are nearest of a size to string together. One gold, two silver or any color and one gold bead can be used between each paper bead or if wall paper having bright colors has been used, black may be strung between with good effect.

White Silk Veils.

PURE silk veils in white, rather coarse mesh, come in large rectangular shape, to be thrown gracefully over the brim of summer sailors; the mesh, quite open over the face and hat, grows finer at the bottom of the veil, and a sprawling flower design is woven into this finer mesh. These white silk veils give a dressy effect to the sport or semisport costume, and they are very graceful, floating about, in a summer breeze. Best of all, they may be washed in soap and water and dried in one's room overnight. If pinned out while damp over a pillow they require no ironing.

Covers for Baby Buggy.

NEW covers can be made for the baby carriage when the upholstery becomes soiled or much worn. Cut a paper pattern the size and shape of the back and sides of the carriage, and make the cover of white pique or dainty flowered cretonne. Finish it with a wash braid and make buttonholes along the edge. On the upholstery of the carriage sew pearl buttons, which will keep the cover in place. The cover can easily be removed when it needs laundering.

Dainty Lace.

HAIRPIN or Maltese lace or braid is so simple a child can make it. Use heavy white thread for the hairpin-work, and for the insertion, to be used above the hem, make a double crochet in each loop with two chain-stitches between, with colored thread. For a border finish one edge in this manner, and add a simple little scallop to the other. For insertion for fine materials, lingerie, blouses, children's dresses, etc., use fine thread.

Crocheting Hint.

WHEN thru with your crocheting for the time being, have a cork ready to slip on the hook before putting it away; this prevents it catching into otner articles. To prevent raveling draw out a loop large enough to put the ball or spool of thread thru; then when you pick up the work again it is easy enough to put the ball back thru the loop again.

Suggestion for Knitters.

INSTEAD of making a knot when joining the ends of the yarn, try unraveling the ends about an inch, then place one on top of the other, for the length unraveled, and roll between your fingers. The place where it is joined will not be noticeable after it has been knitted, and is so much better than a knot, especially in making socks.

Easy Way to Bind Off.

SELECT a crochet hook of appropriate size and employ it in place of the right-hand knitting needle. Slip the first stitch onto the crochet hook, then place the hook into the next stitch. Pull the thread thru both that stitch and the loop already on the crochet hook, making a slip stitch. Repeat until all stitches on the left-hand needle have been removed.

Summer Silks.

SUMMER silks in gingham patterns are vying with the real ginghams for first place as morning frocks. They have in their favor the fact that they are more simple to launder, and then there is no denying the fact that silk is the coolest of all materials.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

THE DECOY

By Walter Joseph Delaney

(Copyright.)

THOUGHTLESS Roger Bellamy roused up, aflame with the fires of rivalry, as he entered the home of his betrothed wife. He was too free and welcome a visitor to stand on formality and he did not ring nor wait for a servant to announce him. He was very happy, for the wedding day was only a month distant. He had won the belle of the town, and was proud of it. He loved Ruth Trescott with true, deep fervor, so his heart was singing all the time, those happy happy days.

"Goodby and may heaven bless you!"

He had entered the front parlor and the words halted him. It was then, seeking their source, that his brow corrugated, his breath came quick. In the rear room stood Justin Dacre, and near him Lois. Her face was sympathetic, but sorrowful. She put out a detaining hand. She drew her departing visitor nearer to her. She removed a rose from her bosom; she tendered it to her companion. She spoke some words to him. Then she lifted her face to his own and kissed him tenderly, with tears in her eyes, and Justin Dacre dashed away and a sob was wrung from his lips as he hurried from the home.

He Was Unable to Resist.

Lois had sunk to a chair. Her face was buried in her handkerchief. Bellamy, on fire with jealousy and resentment, came to her side throbbing with emotion.

"Lois!" he spoke, and she looked up startled and shrank slightly at the harshness of his tone.

"That man kissed you!" continued Bellamy hoarsely.

"I asked him to and I told him that he might," replied Lois frankly. Then she burst into tears arresh. "Oh, Roger!" she said, "I feel so sorry for him, for he loved me."

"And told you so!" muttered Roger darkly.

"For the first, the last, the only time. He had not known of your—of our engagement. He was crushed when I told him. Then, the noble, manly fellow that he is, he wished me happiness. He spoke of you, oh! so grandly, so reverently. Roger, he is a good man, and next to you—but, oh, there is only you. Don't frown so dreadfully, dear. I never loved any one but you, I never can."

Roger was mollified, but he did not entirely share the esteem of Lois for his unfortunate rival. He rather pitied Dacre when, a day or two later, he learned that he had abandoned a law practice built up slowly and with painstaking application thru the years. Then, amid the excitement and preparation due to the coming wedding, he forgot all about Dacre. Only Lois remembered the grave-faced, earnest suitor, who had told her that if ever the hour came when the sacrifice of his very life could avail for the benefit of herself and those she loved, he would welcome the test.

"It will take me a week to settle up affairs at the mines at Falcon and get back here," Roger told Lois.

He was making an entire change in his business interests. For years the Falcon mine had been a source of revenue to him since his father died. It had, however, brought trouble as well as revenue. There had been bitterly contested litigation with Big Barlow, a ruffian prospector, who had made a fictitious claim to its ownership.

Roger had beaten Barlow fairly in the courts of justice and the latter had vowed vengeance. Roger had decided to move to the East. He had sold the mine for a large sum, and his last connection with it would be to deliver possession to a representative of the syndicate which had purchased it.

Falcon was fifty miles distant across a barren stretch, where it was not always safe to travel on account of outlaw characters who infested it at times. Roger made the journey to the rude frontier settlement with no mishap, however. He was popular with the workers at the mine, and made himself still more so by giving them a grand farewell spread at the one poor hotel of the place. Then he made legal delivery of the property to the syndicate man and was ready to return to civilization and Lois.

"Give you a tip, gov'nor," a friendly miner told him the last day of his sojourn at the diggings. "The boys tell me that Big Barlow was hanging around Little Louie's joint last evening."

"That doesn't interest me," assured Roger, recognizing the undercurrent of a subtle warning in the sinister information.

"It should," persisted the miner, "for he was ugly with drink and boasted that he was going to get even with you."

"I'll be on the lookout, friend," pledged Roger, but lightly. "Hello! who is that man?"

Roger stared and then started after a man across the street, but the latter had disappeared with Roger's companion having just a brief glance at him.

"Newcomer, don't know his name. Looking for work, I understand."

"It was Dacre," reflected Roger, as he went slowly and thoughtfully toward his hotel. "Poor fellow! bent on burying himself because of his great disappointment. I wish I had a chance to be friendly with him."

That opportunity did not materialize, however, and Roger's kindly impulse was obscured in the bustle of preparations for his leaving the place that evening. The night promised to be clear, tho slightly chilly, with a full moon, and Roger, in high spirits, anticipated a glorious gallop over the old mountain trail, with every foot of which he was familiar.

A dozen humble but loyal friends waved him a cheery good-by as, his satchel strapped behind his saddle, his light overcoat collar drawn well up to his eyes, he touched the spur to the splendid animal he rode.

Roger had proceeded less than five miles when, on turning a shoulder of rock, he was confronted by two men. Both wore masks. So quickly did they halt him, so speedily did they pull him from his horse that he was unable to resist. To his amazement his long enveloping overcoat was dragged from his back. The coat of one of his assailants was substituted. Roger's arms were secured behind him, he was remounted on one of the horses of his captors. Its owner, donning the overcoat and springing into the saddle of Roger's horse, put the spurs to the animal, shouting to his comrade:

"Get him away by the new cut across the plateau and make no delay."

The victim of profuse mystification, Roger was released at the outskirts of Oreville, four hours later. Not a word had his conductor spoken during the swift dash, but two days later Roger knew the truth.

Justin Dacre had given his life to save him. He knew of the trap set by Big Barlow. He impersonated Roger in a decoy dash past the ambush of the desperadoes. He led them a ten-mile chase, at last receiving a fusillade that ended his life.

They brought the hero to Oreville and buried him with honors, and tears, and love. And into the souls of Lois and Roger there came a solemn influence, a sacred memory that kept alive undying reverence for the noble wanderer who had made their happiness possible.

* * *

Presence of Mind.

"YOU chaps talk about nerve and keeping cool under fire, but I've seen a finer bit of presence of mind right here in my home town than I saw when I was in the thick of things 'over there.' I was motoring with a friend and as he was driving thru the village he lost control of the car. It dashed into the postoffice, smashed thru the plate glass window and finished up by turning on its side and burying the postmaster.

"My friend picked himself up and, advancing to the counter, or what was left of it, he said to the girl there as he took three pennies out of his pocket: 'A stamp, please!'"

Jobs and the Man.

THE inquisitive neighbor slowly worked her way thru the tall weeds in the back yard of the lady next door.

"Glory, but it's hot! Ain't you meltin', washing them clothes?" she said, opening the conversation with the lady at the tub.

"Melting is no name for it," replied the lady at the tub, wiping the perspiration from her wrinkled brow.

"If that old man of mine don't go to work very soon and stay on the job I'll not have a speck of flesh left on my poor old bones—believe me."

"Wasn't I thinkin' that somethin was wrong" eagerly continued the inquisitive neighbor. "I've seen him diggin' bait and goin' fishin,' for the last month. He don't stick to one job very long, do he?"

"That's the whole trouble," resumed the lady at the tub. "That man of mine has had more jobs than any ten men in the State. He's been everything from an actor to an oyster cracker. And the funny part of it all is that he seems to get by with it and fills the bill on any job he tackles.

"He's went from a scene shifter to the leading man with a show, from a fertilizer trucker to a salesman for a perfume and face powder company. He's been a chauffeur for a minister and a driver for a brewery. The truth is that he has held every job on the calendar with the exception of a jockey and a policeman. He's too heavy for the track and too light for the force."

"He seems to be a good natured, kind hearted and pleasant soul tho," ventured the inquisitive neighbor.

"He's all of that," resumed the lady of the tub. "He don't drink, smoke or chew. He's got more friends than a man on pay day. A woman could not ask for a better man, but he's as restless as a caged beast. He loves the beauties of nature and is only satisfied when he's out in the woods or fishing.

"A wiser head never worked on a pair of shoulders than my old man's. I think he has the ingredients of another Edison in him, for every time he gets a chance he stands around watching me wash clothes. I wouldn't be a bit surprised to see him invent some new type of washing machine one of these days."

"He is a thoughtful husband, now isn't he?" said the inquisitive neighbor.

* * *

More Trouble.

"WELL, the railroads are finally under government control."

"Yes," assented Senator Flubdub, "and now I suppose I'll have to look after any baggage lost by my constituents."

All Worsted Serge Pants Made to Order $1.65

Ask local tailors to make a pair of fine blue serge pants for less than $5 or $6 and see what they tell you. And yet our price is only $1.65. We positively guarantee a perfect fit and your complete satisfaction or money back. Remember, we make all Suits, Pants and Overcoats tailor-made to your individual measurements and no extra charge of any kind for novelty features.

Express Prepaid

Wonderful New Plan The greatest plan ever thought of for high class made-to-order suits and overcoats at lowest bed rock prices. Your self-tailor-made-to-order—FREE just to make everybody ask where you got it. Make $2,500 to $3,000 a year in your spare time. Send postal today for most sensational, most beautiful and interesting book you have ever seen.

Moving Picture Tie-Up

Scenes of Theda Bara in Cleopatra, Annette Kellerman in Garden of the Gods. Scores of others in many colors. Also greatest collection of woolen samples and fashions ever shown. Don't send a cent. A postal brings everything—explains all. Most perfect measurement outfit ever devised. Write quick.

RELIABLE TAILORING CO.
311 S. Peoria St., Chicago, Ill.

Rheumatism

A Home Cure Given By One Who Had It

In the spring of 1893 I was attacked by Muscular and Inflammatory Rheumatism. I suffered as only those who have it know, for over three years. I tried remedy after remedy, and doctor after doctor, but such relief as I received was only temporary. Finally, I found a remedy that cured me completely, and it has never returned. I have given it to a number who were terribly afflicted and even bedridden with Rheumatism, and it effected a cure in every case.

I want every sufferer from any form of rheumatic trouble to try this marvelous healing power. Don't sent a cent; simply mail your name and address and I will send it free to try. After you have used it and it has proven itself to be that long-looked-for means of curing your rheumatism, you may send the price of it, one dollar, but understand, I do not want your money unless you are perfectly satisfied to send it. Isn't that fair? Why suffer any longer when positive relief is thus offered you free? Don't delay. Write today.

Mark H. Jackson, No. 640D Gurney Bldg., Syracuse, N. Y.

DROPSY Treated One Week Free. Short breathing relieved in a few hours; swelling and water reduced in a few days; regulates liver, kidneys, and heart. Write for Free Trial Treatment. Collum Dropsy Remedy Co., Dept. 6, Atlanta, Ga.

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE to make big money easily and quickly, selling YOU DID YOUR BIT. Our latest and positively the finest war novelty ever produced. Sells on sight. Act quickly. Write at once for our attractive proposition. Superior Art Service, 121 East 23d St., New York

A Woman's Message to Women:

(TRADE-MARK)

R. F. D. 2, Box 58, JOELTON, TENN.

"Last Spring I was in a critical condition from female troubles, inflammation, displacement, irregularity and flooding, so that I would have to stay in bed sometimes for two weeks, and the doctor thought I would have to go through an operation. I wrote for your ten days' Opaline treatment, which helped me wonderfully, so I sent for a box, and at the last two times, I staid up and did my work. I think Mrs. Summers' medicine is the greatest thing on earth for women's ailments, and I will recommend it every chance I have." Mrs. Ellen Anderson.

COLLINSTON, LA.

"I am writing to let you know what your Opaline treatment has done for myself and daughter. She had suffered ever since entering womanhood until she tried your remedy; but she is getting along fine now and all of her pains and cramps have left her. As for myself, it has cured me of untold suffering and weakening drains. Doctors did not help, but after using your remedy one month, I am up and able to do all my work for ten in the family. I can't find words to thank you enough." Mrs. H. N. Osborn.

Only A Woman Knows A Woman's Trials and Understands Her Need of Sympathy and Help.

That is why hundreds of women gladly testify to the value of Mrs. Summers' popular **Opaline Home Treatment** in relieving so much of the misery and suffering known only to womankind.

READER, if you are troubled with some of those special ailments of women—

SEND FOR A FREE TEN DAYS' TREATMENT

with illustrated, descriptive copy of *"Woman's Own Medical Adviser,"* and **test Mrs. Summers' Opaline Remedy for yourself,** in your own home, without the knowledge or aid of anyone. You can afterward continue if you wish, at about 12c. a week. For twenty-five years women have reported it satisfactory, and often superior to vegetable tonics and compounds. It is used by old and young and does not interfere with daily work. Write in confidence, as your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman. For the Free Trial, address,

THE SUMMERS MEDICAL CO., Women's Dept. 105 **South Bend, Ind.**

Mrs. Summers' Remedies are sold by many Druggists.

AUTO PRIZE CONTEST

This picture shows one of our friends driving an automobile like the one we are going to give away. In this picture there are six partly hidden faces which it will be lots of fun for you to find. It is not so easy to find the faces in this picture, but by close search and by twisting and turning the picture around, they will be revealed to you. Can you find them?

YOU WILL WIN A PRIZE

If you do; try it, don't give up. It will pay you. When you have found four of the faces, mark each with a cross (X), cut out the picture and mail it to us. When your answer is received we will send you a prize which we know you will appreciate, and it will be a big surprise to you. We will also make you a present of 2,000 free Auto votes, and tell you all about this splendid automobile, touring car or roadster, which we are going to give away. We will give away many other prizes for just a little effort.

MEN, WOMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS

You can win an automobile in addition to splendid prizes such as watches, cameras, and other things you like. Write us today, sending your answer with the faces marked, with 4c in stamps to help pay the postage and mailing expenses of the present which you have won. It will be mailed to you with your Certificate of Entry and 2,000 free votes in our Auto Contest. We will also send you a copy of two different popular publications worth 5c an issue. Write your name and address plainly so there will be no mistake.

Auto Puzzle Dept. B, W. D. Boyce Co., 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

A Surprise Party.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET came stumbling up the front steps in a hurry. Her blue eyes were moist and her hands were closed tight, but she held in the cry bravely until the front door closed behind her. Then out dropped the tears from her big blue eyes, and out popped the wails from her little red mouth and her head was buried in mother's lap among all the stockings that mother was busily mending. But of course, mother had time to soothe her little girl and listen to her tale of troubles.

"Oh, dear! Boo-hoo! Cross Patch won't come to my tea party. She's playing with Lucy Locket and she says she likes her better'n she likes me. An' we were going to have cooky boys. Boo-hoo!"

"There, there, deary; don't cry any more about it. I know two little girls who would love to come to your party—two—and you can't possibly guess who they are. You run out and set your table, and I think perhaps they will be waiting at the front door when you're ready. I'll go now and invite them."

Little Miss Muffet's eyes were suddenly shining with smiles instead of tears, and out she ran into the yard and dragged her little play tea table from the cellar. She set it up on its wiggly legs under the arbor, and put her bright red bench on one side and her little red chair on the other. And then she ran into the kitchen, being very careful to shoo the flies from the screen door when she opened it, and fetched the basket that Polly had packed with goodies and dishes to put them in and spoons to eat with.

When the table was all set with a cooky boy at each place and a little pile of bread cut into little squares just ready to drop into a bowl of milk, and a bright shiny apple cut up into little crescent moons, Little Miss Muffet ran into the house to see if her surprise guests were really there.

Just then she heard the bell ring and she ran all excited, to open the front door.

What do you think she saw?

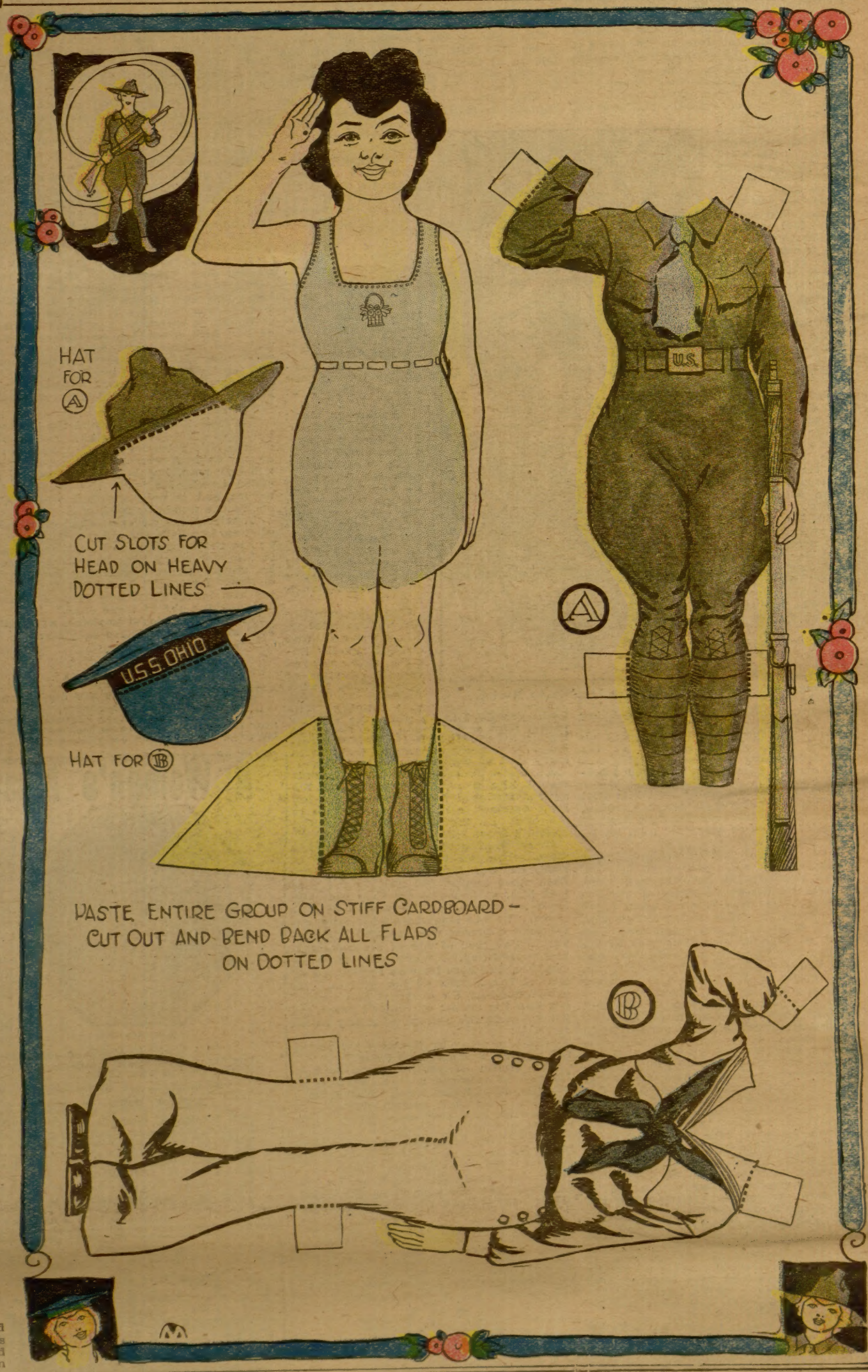
There leaning straight against a box, stood two little dolls that mother used to have when she was a little girl, all dressed up in their hats and shawls, and even silk mitts. Little Miss Muffet cried out in delight, but had almost forgotten them, as mother kept them locked up in a trunk in the attic and only showed them to her once in a long while.

"We've come to your tea party," squeaked a voice from somewhere, that sounded very much like mother's when she was pretending, and then mother came around the corner of the house and helped Little Miss Muffet take her guests' shawls off to make them more comfortable and lead them to the yard and put them in their places at the table.

There, they sat, and they smiled politely at everything their hostess said, and they did not help themselves to too much bread, and they even let Little Miss Muffet nibble at their cooky boys! But, best of all, before the party was half over, Cross Patch came running over with two big handsful of fresh roasted chestnuts that Mother Goose had given her. And she didn't like Lucy Locket better than Little Miss Muffet after all; or, at least Little Miss Muffet didn't stop to think or care whether she did or not, so busy was she giving Cross Patch a cooky boy and munching the chestnuts that Cross Patch gave her. So all Little Miss Muffet's tears had been for nothing.

LOOK GIRLS! HERE'S A PATRIOTIC DOLLIE!

To Get the Best Results You Should First Paste This Drawing on Cardboard or Stiff Wrapping Paper. Then Follow Directions and You Will Have a Soldier Girl or a Sailor Girl, as You Choose.


HAT FOR (A)
CUT SLOTS FOR HEAD ON HEAVY DOTTED LINES
U.S.S. OHIO
HAT FOR (B)
U.S.
(A)
PASTE ENTIRE GROUP ON STIFF CARDBOARD – CUT OUT AND BEND BACK ALL FLAPS ON DOTTED LINES
(B)

"All Setting."

A FARMER was sawing wood when it occurred to him that he ought to have the help of one or more of his five boys. Lifting up his voice, he called, but not a boy appeared.

At dinner, of course, they all appeared and it was not necessary to call them.

"Where were you all about two hours ago, when I wanted you and shouted for you?"

"I was in the shop settin' the saw," said one.

"And I was in the barn settin' a hen," said the second.

"I was in gran'ma's room settin' the clock" said the third.

"I was in the garret settin' the trap," said the fourth.

"You are a wonderful set," remarked the farmer. "And where were you?" he continued, turning to the youngster.

"I was on the doorstep settin' still."

The Wrong End.

THE other night little Alfred insisted upon a course of procedure which his grandmother had rigidly forbidden, and made it necessary for her to say to him something peremptorily:

"You cannot, Alfred, and that's the end of it."

"Oh, grandma," said the boy, looking up ruefully; it's the wrong end!"

Not True to Type.

"SMELL anything, grandmother?" asked the youngster who was lying on the floor drawing.

Grandmother assured him she did not.

The young artist gave a few finishing touches and repeated his question. Grandmother sniffed the air and again declared she smelled nothing.

"Well," said the boy, "you ought to. I have just drawn a skunk!"

On the Same Principle.

"MOTHER, what color are my eyes?" asked Clara.

"They are gray, dear."

"Mother, could the lady that makes your gray hair brown color my eyes?"

Mother Doing Her Bit.

"IS YOUR mother at home, Willie?"

"No, Mrs. Smith. She is Red Cross-in' somewhere. We don't expect her home for good until the war is over."

Solving the Problem.

"PAPAS never spank, do they?" asked Alice, who was the only child.

"You bet they do," said Bennie, "and they hurt worse than mammas 'cause they've got heavier soles to their slippers."

"Then," suggested Alice, "why don't you get your mamma to spank you before your pap gets home?"

No Danger There.

"IT WAS so cold at our house that it froze the water pipes," boasted Ella.

"Our water hasn't got any pipes," said Mary; "it comes out of a faucet."

Proving a Theory

"HOW I hate theories," pleasantly stated the woman who looked tired. "Whenever I begin really hating a theory I am so glad that I am unacquainted with the person who invented it, because I should have to hate him or her worse!

"What I recently ran against was that neat, Spencerian theory that if you refrain from doing a thing somebody else will do it. That is, if you do not trail around waiting on your careless children, said children will reform and wait upon themselves. For six months I have congratulated myself on my good sense in making Marguerite attend to her own mending and care of her wardrobe. Any girl, I had told her, who was 16 years old, was sufficiently aged to darn her own hosiery and sew up rents and put on buttons, and it was up to her. My child agreed that those cares were indeed hers and cheerfully assumed responsibility.

"In fact, now that I think of it, she was far too cheerful. I quite boasted about my cleverness to other mothers when I would find them frantically darning or mending with one eye on the clock and their distracted minds on the meeting at which they were due at that minute or the pie they should be baking. I told them that they were exceedingly foolish and what they needed was to give their offspring a sense of responsibility.

"Whenever I took care to survey Marguerite minutely she appeared to be quite all right and properly garbed. 'You are attending to mending the things as they come up from the laundry each week?' I would inquire, and 'Oh, yes, mother!' my child would respond sweetly and promptly. I was amazed to find how easy it was. And then I started to pack her trunk the day before she was going on a week's house party."

"You aren't going to faint or anything are you?" inquired the audience.

"What's the use now, it's over?" demanded the tired looking lady. "I give you my word that as I dragged things out from bureau drawers and from hangers in closets I became more and more shocked and feeble. Incidentally, I did not know that there were so many safety pins in the world or of such infinite size and variety.

"When I finished extracting them I had several bushels strewn around and the apparel they had adorned was lying much apart, sad and buttonless. Every loose button which had a shank was pinned on with a safety pin. The ends of coat pockets which had ripped loose were fastened with safety pins. A troublesome coat sleeve lining that being loose let one's hand slide between it and the sleeve itself was neatly pinned with a row of 'em. All the buttons and tabs on her knitted sweater were pinned from the inside. Lace ruffles were pinned up in festoons on her best petticoats. Georgette blouses with nonpinnable buttons were buttonless and showed signs of being pinned together on the outside with fancy dress pins.

"One thing which baffled her genius was stockings. Nobody, no matter how wily, can pin holes in hosiery together and the result was that the holes flourished extensively.

"Safety pins took the place of all hooks and eyes, long vanished from inside belts of dresses and linings.

"Well, I started in. I used needles, thread, scissors, sewing machine and my nervous system. I sewed on thousands of buttons, papers and papers of hooks and eyes and snappers, miles of rents, darned till I was pale purple in the face. If she was content to be dressed that way, the proper theory was to let her alone till she woke up to her iniquity, but I simply couldn't have her appearing at a house party in that state.

"I ate no dinner because I had no time and when Marguerite herself strolled in at 9 o'clock, having dined at a friend's and sweetly inquired whether I had got her trunk packed—and, oh, yes, was there anything she could do? I exploded and blew up.

"When I was thru Marguerite mildly said she couldn't see why pins didn't do just as well, inasmuch as I had never known she was pinned together until I investigated—and, oh, yes, if she washed that rose sweater now wouldn't it be dry when the trunk went at 7 in the morning? And a sweater in very damp weather takes a week to dry out!

"I went to bed with an ice bag on my throbbing brow and Marguerite got off the next day perfectly happy because I was downtown that minute buying whole hosiery and things to mail her to save her from disgrace. But I don't believe in fairies or theories any more!"

"Silly!" said her audience. "Your own child has proved your theory beautifully—she didn't do what she should and somebody else, being you, did do it!"

"Oh, my goodness!" moaned the tired lady, "so she has!"

⁂

Not to Be Taken In.

"Germany will sing small, very small in the end, but we'll answer her like the judge."

The speaker was Provost Marshal General Crowder.

"Yes," he went on, "we'll no more be softened by Germany's penitence than the judge was by the kidnaper, who wiped his eyes on his cuff and blubbered:

"'Judge, I'm down and out.'

"'No, no, my man,' said the judge. 'You're down, but you're not out yet. You won't be out for seven years.'"

⁂

No Challenge for Him.

Examining Officer—"And why did you assault the sentry in this brutal fashion?"

Private Hank (late of the gashouse gang)—"Well, de guy sez he challenges me, so I busts him one in de jaw."

Classified Want Ads

Information— The rate for one insertion in The Saturday Blade and one insertion in Chicago Ledger is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500-514 N. Dearborn St., Chicago.

AGENTS WANTED

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